MARVEL® COMICS GROUP
APR
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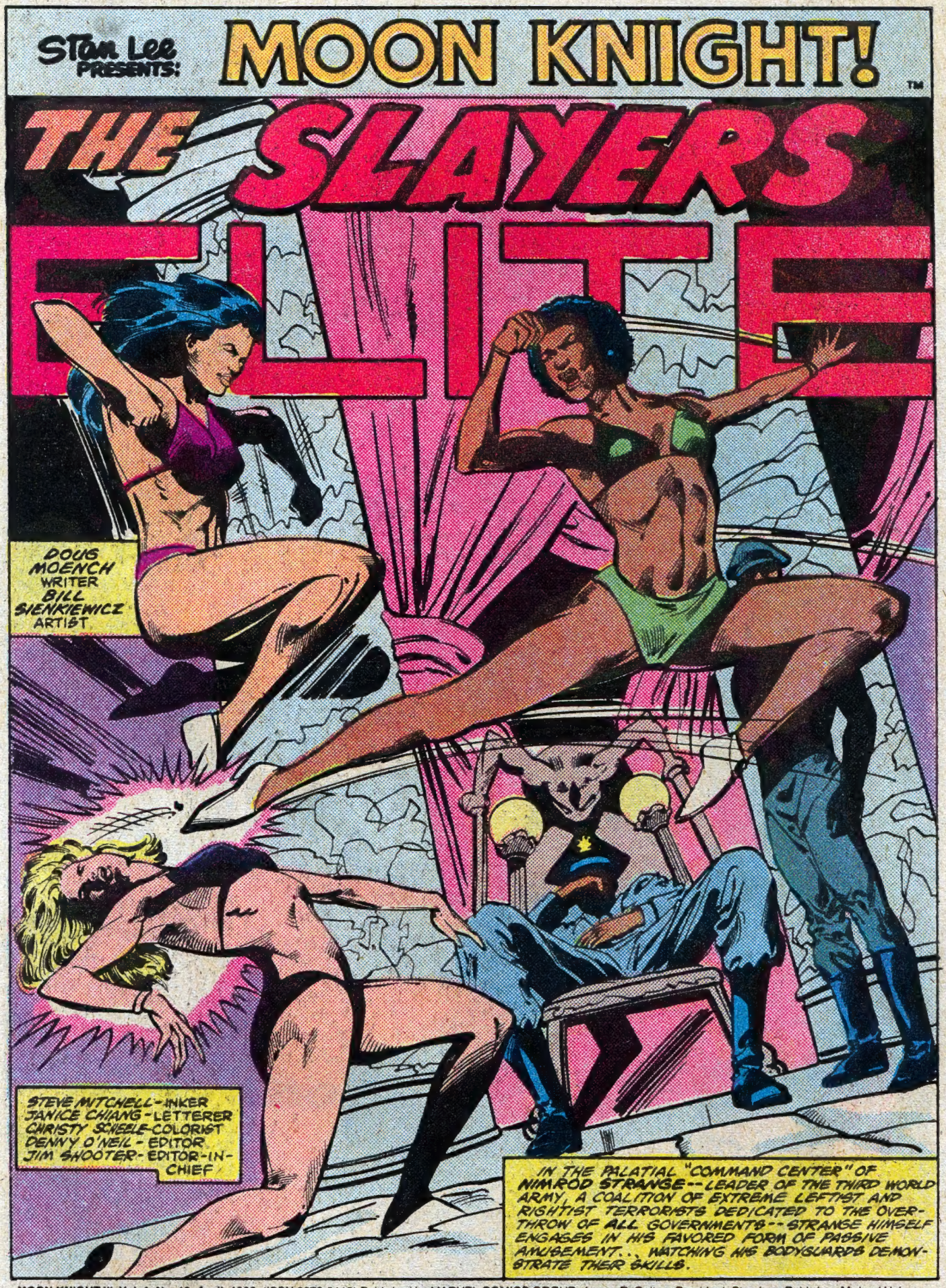
#18
MOON KNIGHT
ALONE AGAINST THE SLAYERS ELITE!

SCOTTIE in A Cracker Jack story
OKAY, SCOTTIE! THE SCORE IS TIED, BASES LOADED, AND TWO OUTS! GET IN THERE AND SHOW 'EM WHAT YOU'RE MADE OF.
COACH
15 CRACKER JACK
I'LL DO MY BEST, COACH.
STRIKE ONE!
¦GULP¦ WHAT IF I STRIKE OUT?!??
STRIKE TWO!
YOU CAN DO IT, SCOTTIE!
YOU'RE A CRACKER JACK.
ZOOM!
WHAP!
WHEN YOU'RE REALLY GOOD-THEY CALL YOU CRACKER JACK
CRACK
HOME RUN
YOU DID IT, SCOTTIE.
WE WON THE PLAYOFFS!
WHAT A CRACKER JACK!
Cracker Jack
CANDIED POPCORN AND PEANUTS
Toy Surprise INSIDE!
BORDEN
NET WT. 4 3/4 OZ.
Crunchy caramel-coated popcorn and peanuts and a secret toy surprise!



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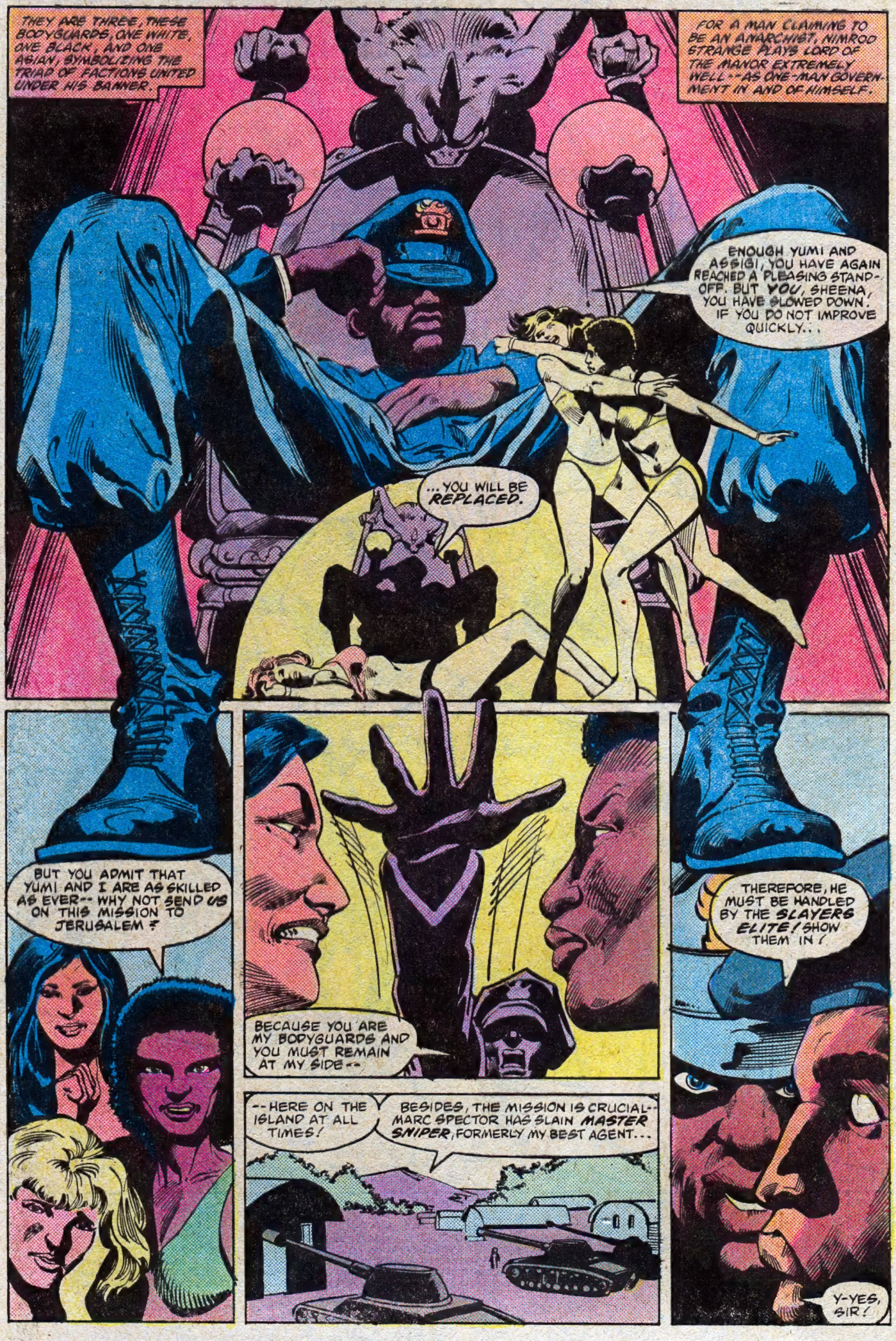
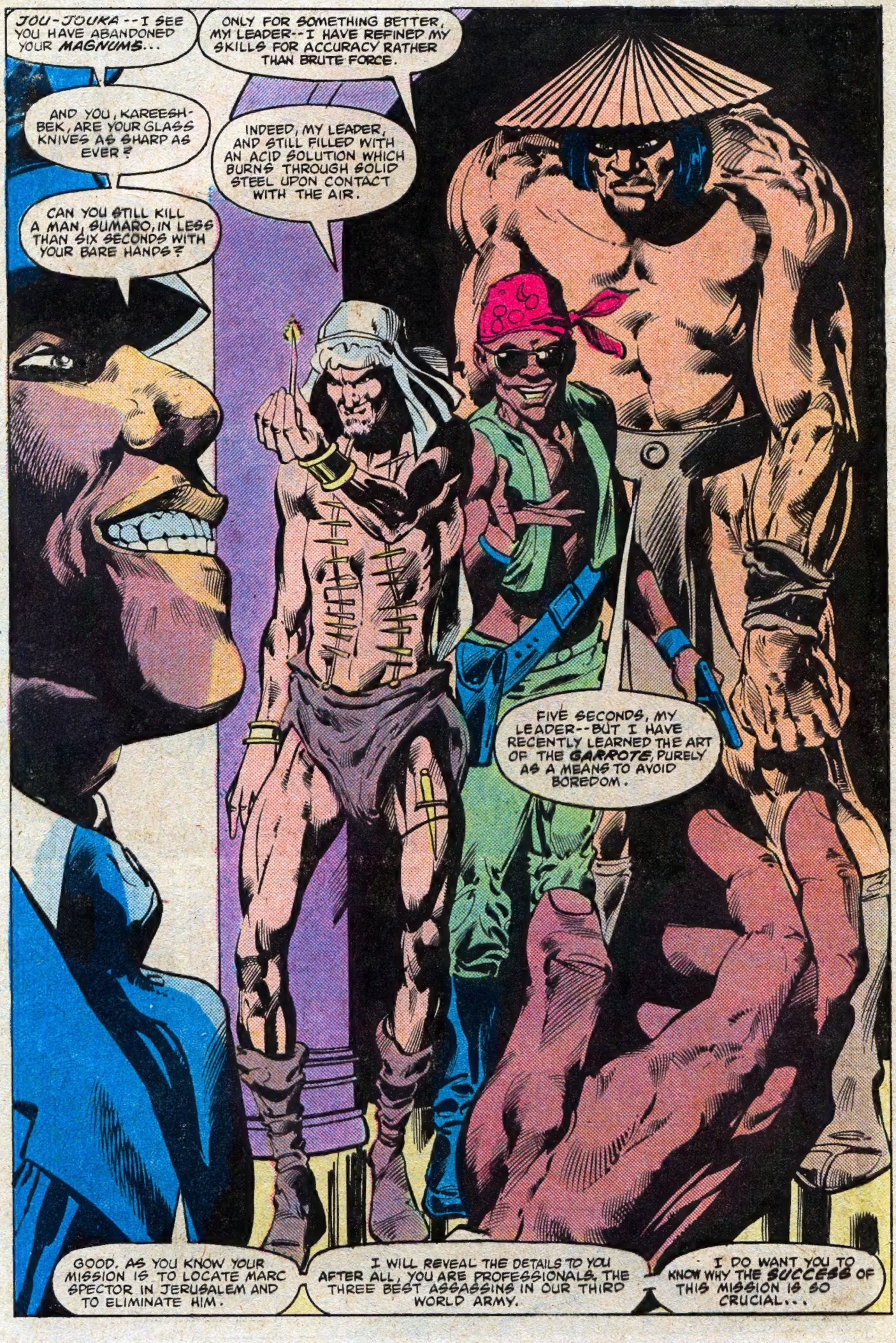
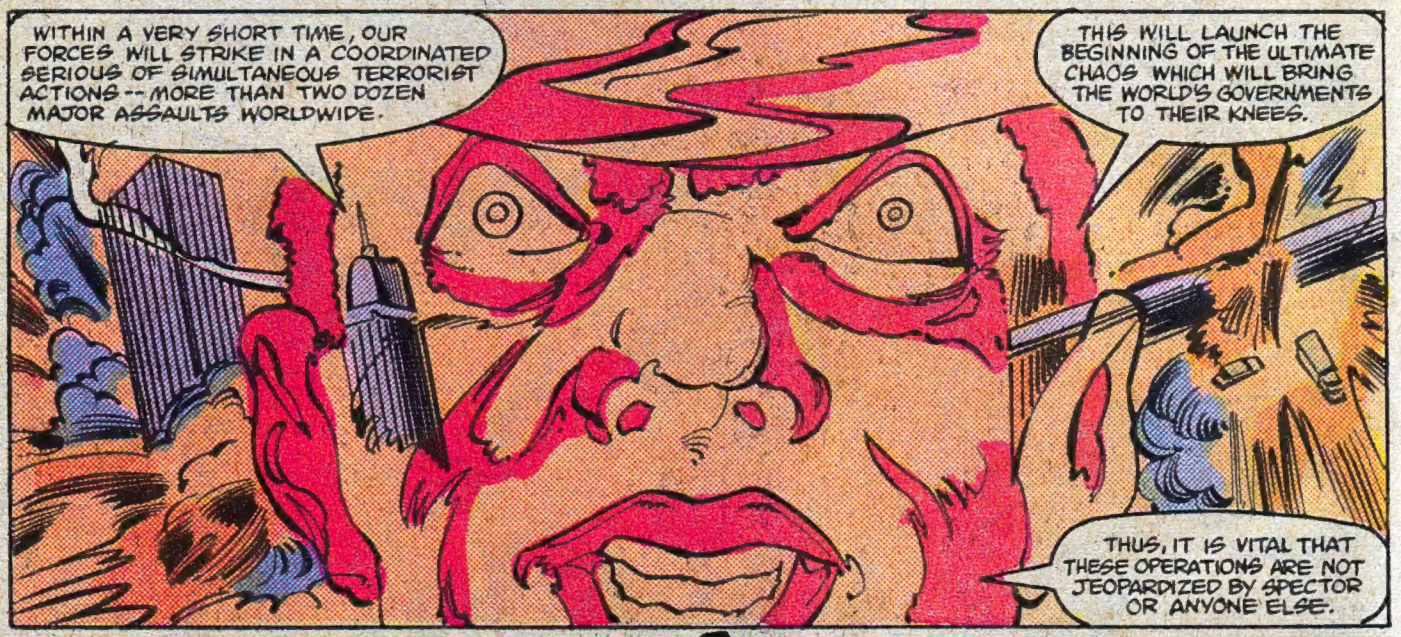
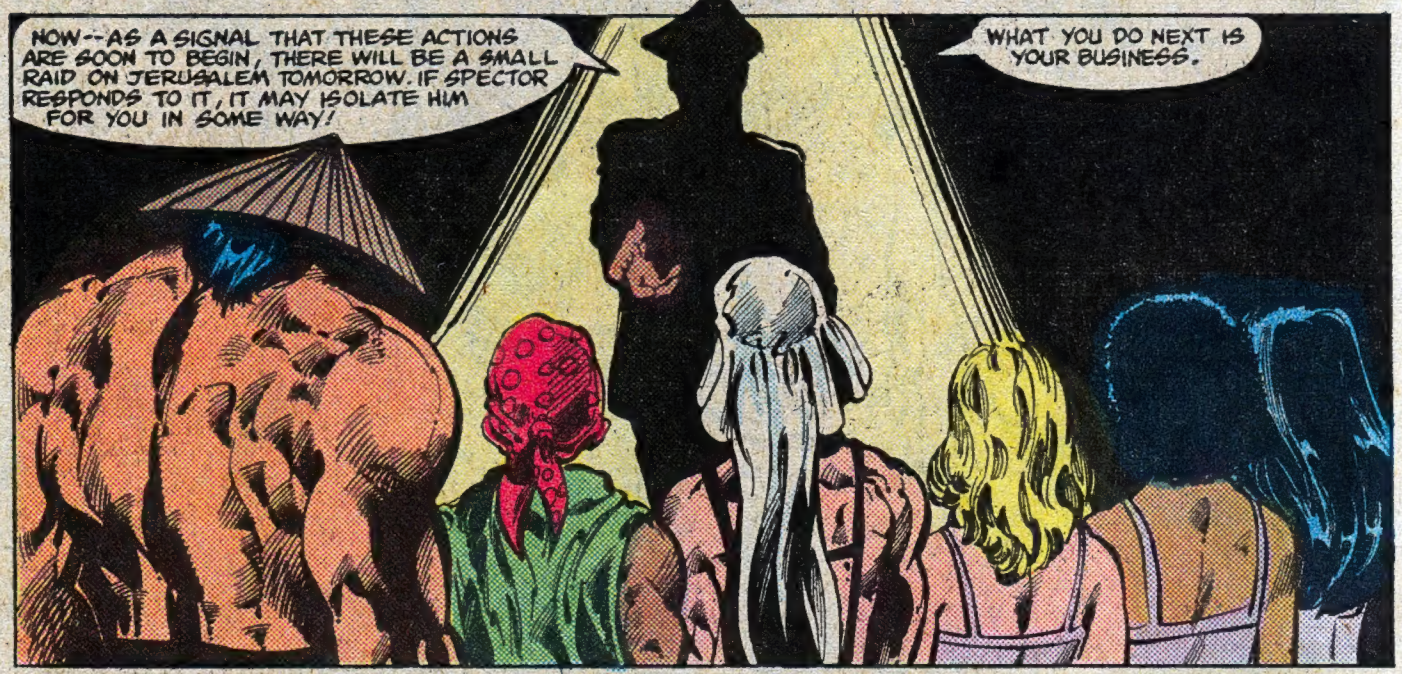
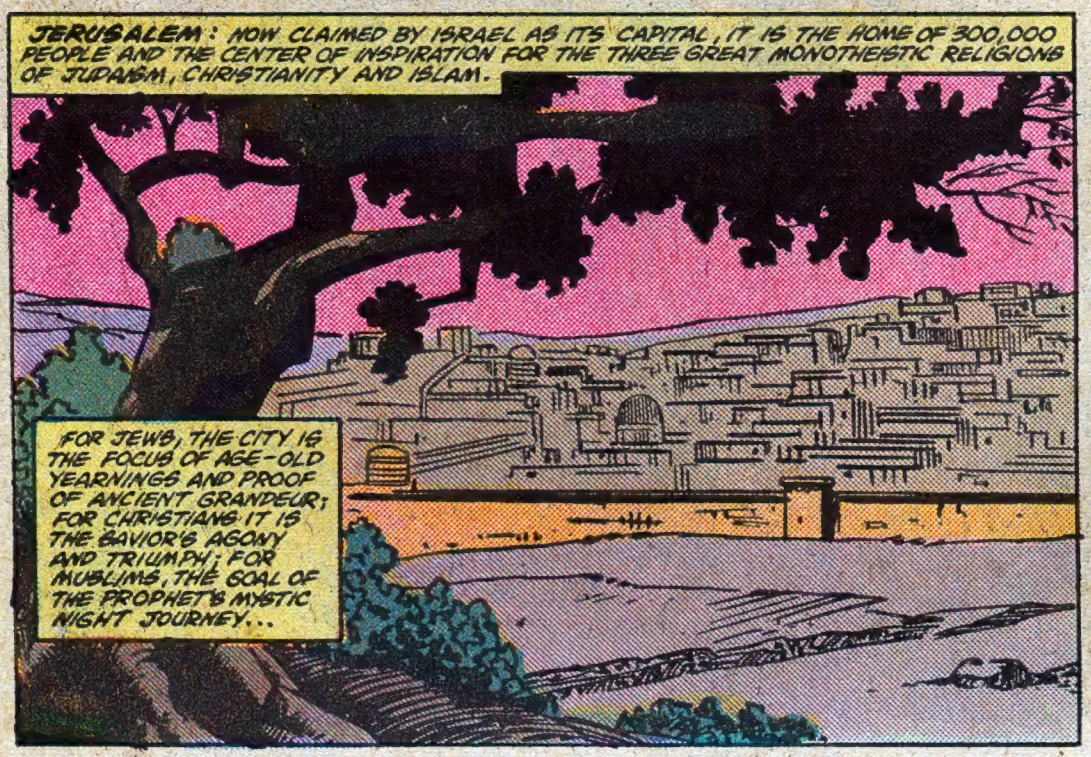

THEY ARE THREE, THESE BODYGUARDS, ONE WHITE, ONE BLACK, AND ONE ASIAN, SYMBOLIZING THE TRIAD OF FACTIONS UNITED UNDER HIS BANNER.
FOR A MAN CLAIMING TO BE AN ANARCHIST, NIMROD STRANGE PLAYS LORD OF THE MANOR EXTREMELY WELL--AS ONE-MAN GOVERNMENT IN AND OF HIMSELF.
ENOUGH YUMI AND ASSIGI, YOU HAVE AGAIN REACHED A PLEASING STAND-OFF. BUT YOU, SHEENA, YOU HAVE SLOWED DOWN. IF YOU DO NOT IMPROVE QUICKLY...
...YOU WILL BE REPLACED.
BUT YOU ADMIT THAT YUMI AND I ARE AS SKILLED AS EVER-- WHY NOT SEND US ON THIS MISSION TO JERUSALEM?
BECAUSE YOU ARE MY BODYGUARDS AND YOU MUST REMAIN AT MY SIDE--
--HERE ON THE ISLAND AT ALL TIMES!
BESIDES, THE MISSION IS CRUCIAL-- MARC SPECTOR HAS SLAIN MASTER SNIPER, FORMERLY MY BEST AGENT...
THEREFORE, HE MUST BE HANDLED BY THE SLAYERS ELITE! SHOW THEM IN!
Y-YES, SIR!

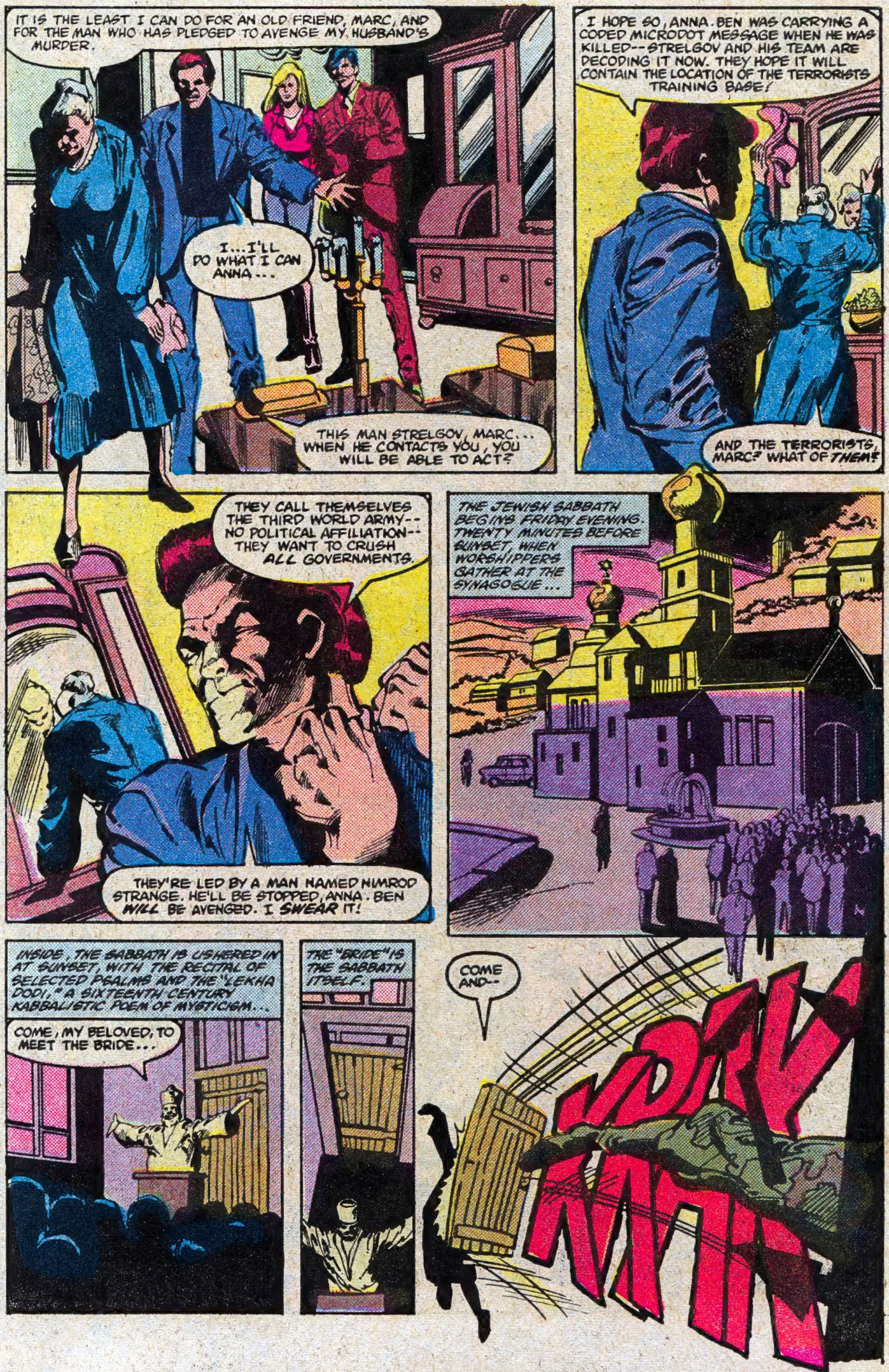

JOU-JOUKA--I SEE YOU HAVE ABANDONED YOUR MAGNUMS...
ONLY FOR SOMETHING BETTER, MY LEADER--I HAVE REFINED MY SKILLS FOR ACCURACY RATHER THAN BRUTE FORCE.
AND YOU, KAREESH-BEK, ARE YOUR GLASS KNIVES AS SHARP AS EVER?
INDEED, MY LEADER, AND STILL FILLED WITH AN ACID SOLUTION WHICH BURNS THROUGH SOLID STEEL UPON CONTACT WITH THE AIR.
CAN YOU STILL KILL A MAN, SUMARO, IN LESS THAN SIX SECONDS WITH YOUR BARE HANDS?
FIVE SECONDS, MY LEADER--BUT I HAVE RECENTLY LEARNED THE ART OF THE GARROTE, PURELY AS A MEANS TO AVOID BOREDOM.
GOOD. AS YOU KNOW YOUR MISSION IS TO LOCATE MARC SPECTOR IN JERUSALEM AND TO ELIMINATE HIM.
I WILL REVEAL THE DETAILS TO YOU AFTER ALL, YOU ARE PROFESSIONALS, THE THREE BEST ASSASSINS IN OUR THIRD WORLD ARMY.
I DO WANT YOU TO KNOW WHY THE SUCCESS OF THIS MISSION IS SO CRUCIAL...

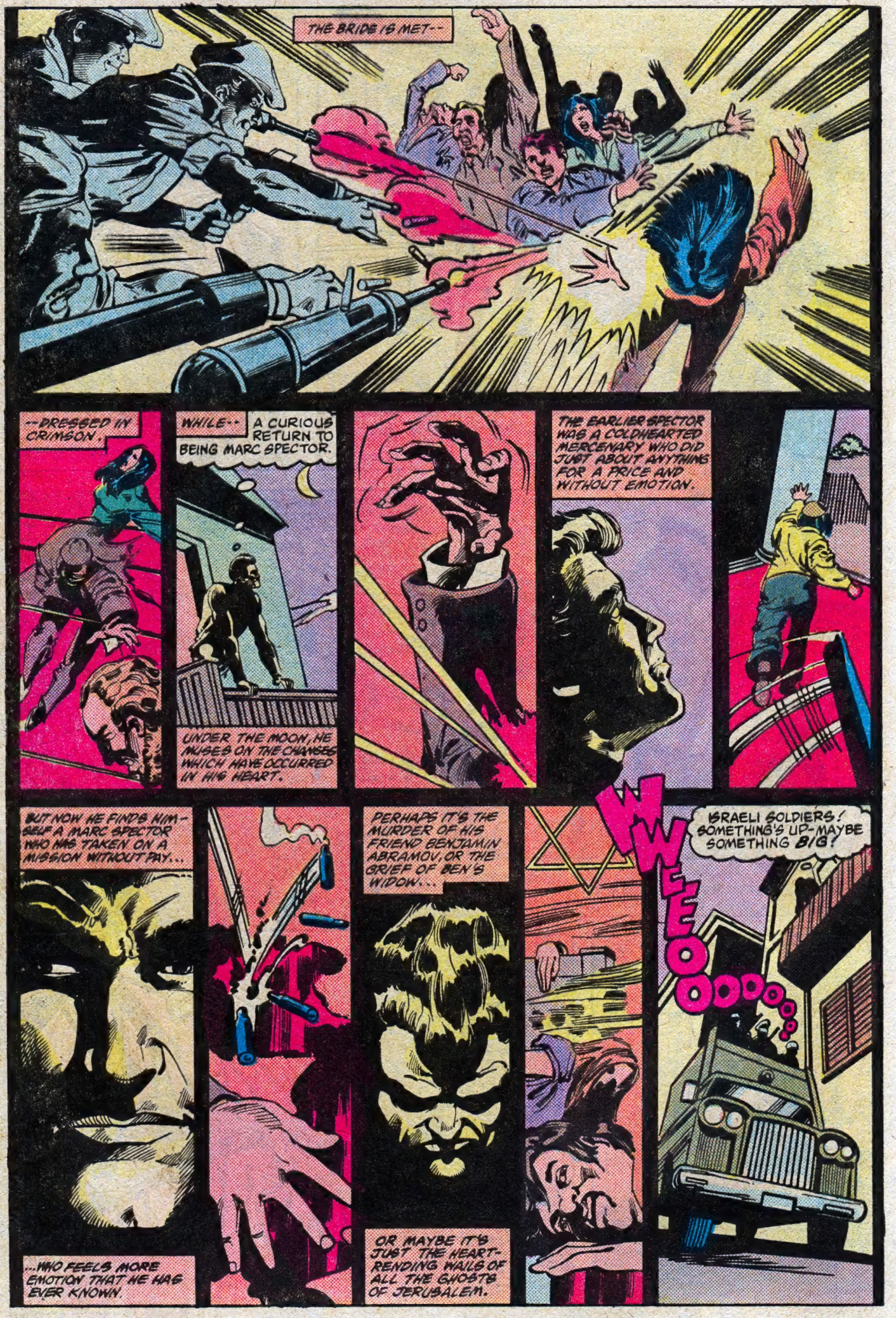

WITHIN A VERY SHORT TIME, OUR FORCES WILL STRIKE IN A COORDINATED SERIOUS OF SIMULTANEOUS TERRORIST ACTIONS -- MORE THAN TWO DOZEN MAJOR ASSAULTS WORLDWIDE.
THIS WILL LAUNCH THE BEGINNING OF THE ULTIMATE CHAOS WHICH WILL BRING THE WORLD'S GOVERNMENTS TO THEIR KNEES.
THUS, IT IS VITAL THAT THESE OPERATIONS ARE NOT JEOPARDIZED BY SPECTOR OR ANYONE ELSE.

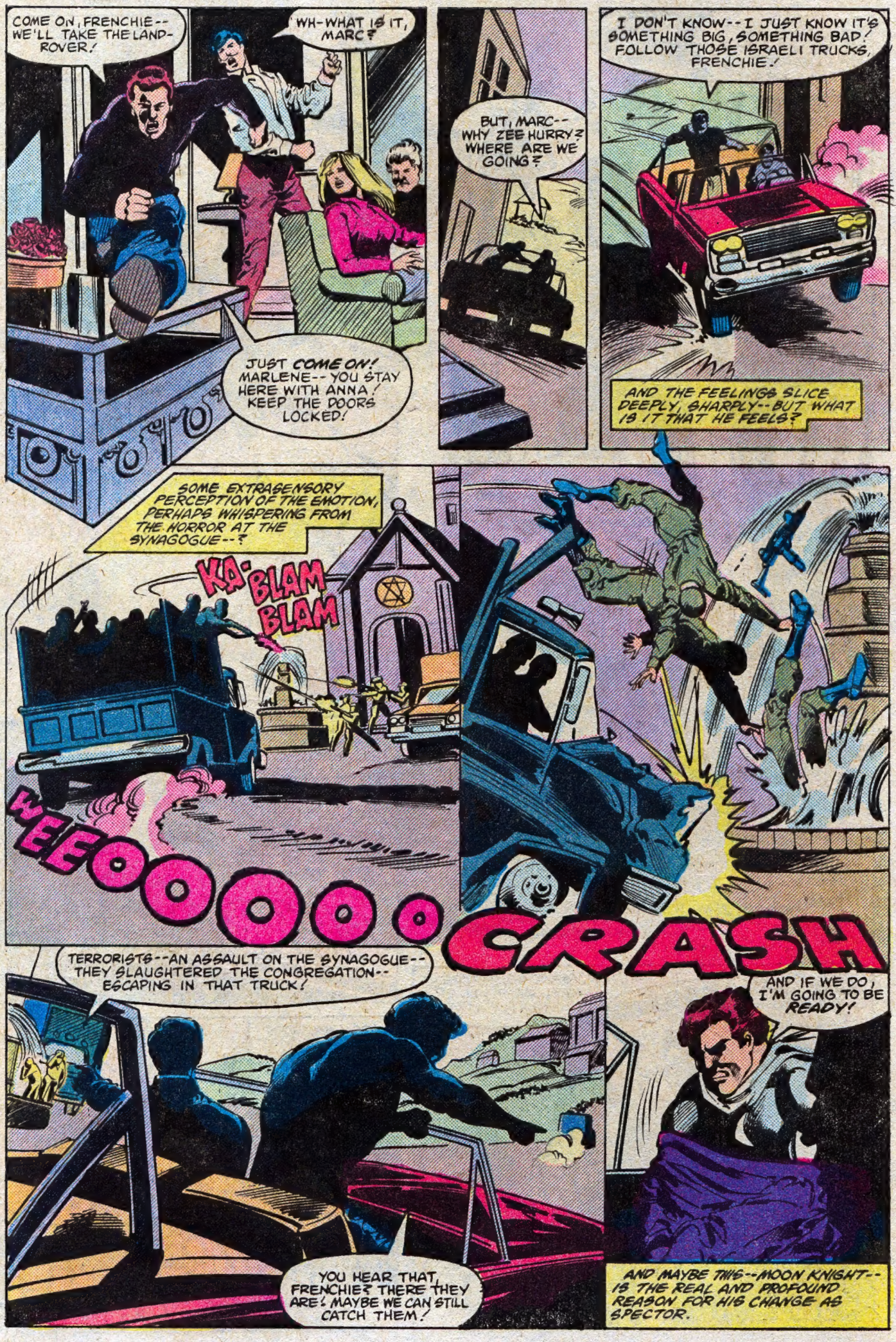

NOW -- AS A SIGNAL THAT THESE ACTIONS ARE SOON TO BEGIN, THERE WILL BE A SMALL RAID ON JERUSALEM TOMORROW. IF SPECTOR RESPONDS TO IT, IT MAY ISOLATE HIM FOR YOU IN SOME WAY!
WHAT YOU DO NEXT IS YOUR BUSINESS.

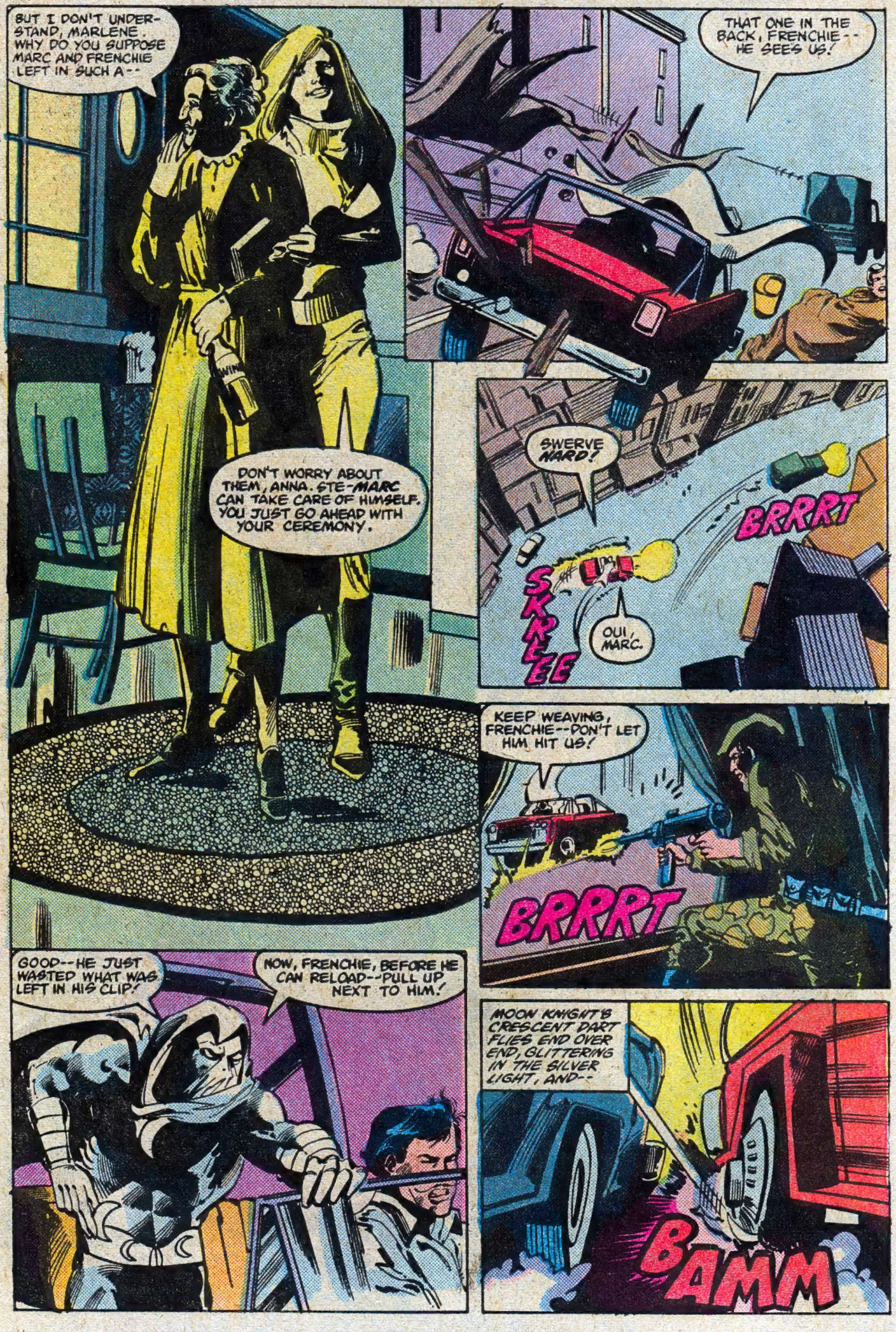

JERUSALEM: NOW CLAIMED BY ISRAEL AS ITS CAPITAL, IT IS THE HOME OF 300,000 PEOPLE AND THE CENTER OF INSPIRATION FOR THE THREE GREAT MONOTHEISTIC RELIGIONS OF JUDAISM, CHRISTIANITY AND ISLAM.
FOR JEWS, THE CITY IS THE FOCUS OF AGE-OLD YEARNINGS AND PROOF OF ANCIENT GRANDEUR; FOR CHRISTIANS IT IS THE SAVIOR'S AGONY AND TRIUMPH; FOR MUSLIMS, THE GOAL OF THE PROPHET'S MYSTIC NIGHT JOURNEY...

...YET HOLINESS IS NOT ON THE MIND OF THE AMERICAN VISITING...
THANK YOU FOR LETTING US STAY AT YOUR HOUSE, ANNA -- IT'LL ONLY BE UNTIL THIS MAN STRELGOV CONTACTS US FROM SWITZERLAND...

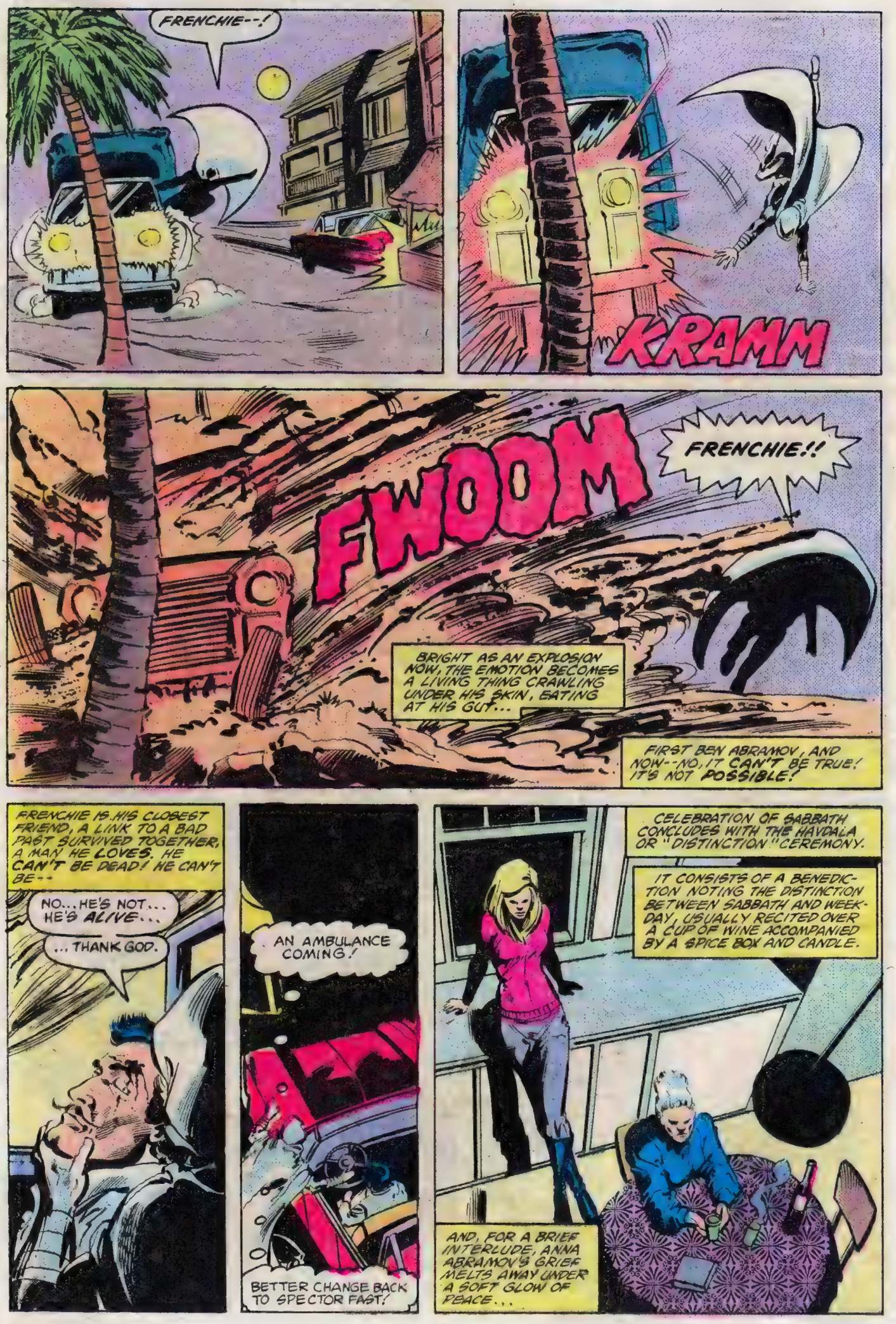

IT IS THE LEAST I CAN DO FOR AN OLD FRIEND, MARC, AND FOR THE MAN WHO HAS PLEDGED TO AVENGE MY HUSBAND'S MURDER.
I...I'LL DO WHAT I CAN ANNA...
THIS MAN STRELGOV, MARC... WHEN HE CONTACTS YOU, YOU WILL BE ABLE TO ACT?
I HOPE SO, ANNA. BEN WAS CARRYING A CODED MICRODOT MESSAGE WHEN HE WAS KILLED--STRELGOV AND HIS TEAM ARE DECODING IT NOW. THEY HOPE IT WILL CONTAIN THE LOCATION OF THE TERRORISTS TRAINING BASE!
AND THE TERRORISTS, MARC? WHAT OF THEM?
THEY CALL THEMSELVES THE THIRD WORLD ARMY--NO POLITICAL AFFILIATION--THEY WANT TO CRUSH ALL GOVERNMENTS.
THEY'RE LED BY A MAN NAMED NIMROD STRANGE. HE'LL BE STOPPED, ANNA. BEN WILL BE AVENGED. I SWEAR IT!
THE JEWISH SABBATH BEGINS FRIDAY EVENING. TWENTY MINUTES BEFORE SUNSET, WHEN WORSHIPPERS GATHER AT THE SYNAGOGUE...
INSIDE, THE SABBATH IS USHERED IN AT SUNSET, WITH THE RECITAL OF SELECTED PSALMS AND THE "LEKHA DODI," A SIXTEENTH CENTURY KABBALISTIC POEM OF MYSTICISM...
COME, MY BELOVED, TO MEET THE BRIDE...
THE "BRIDE" IS THE SABBATH ITSELF.
COME AND--
WORK

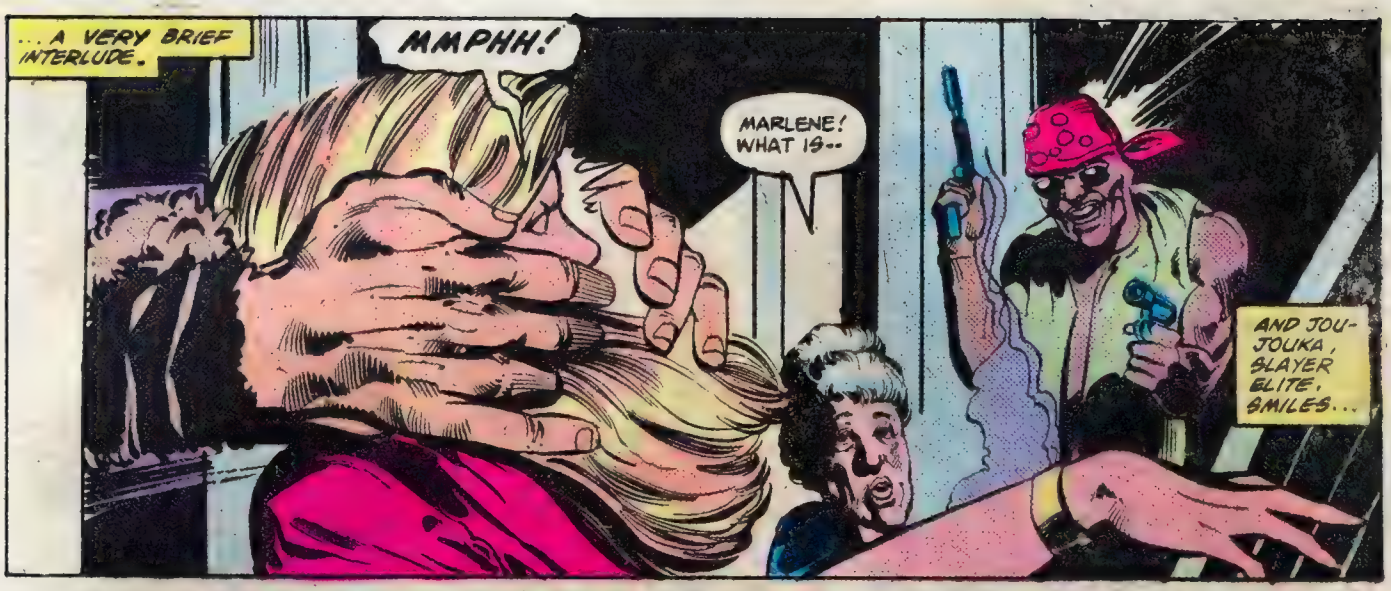

THE BRIDE IS MET--
--DRESSED IN CRIMSON.
WHILE-- A CURIOUS RETURN TO BEING MARC SPECTOR.
UNDER THE MOON, HE MUSES ON THE CHANGES WHICH HAVE OCCURRED IN HIS HEART.
THE EARLIER SPECTOR WAS A COLDHEARTED MERCENARY WHO DID JUST ABOUT ANYTHING FOR A PRICE AND WITHOUT EMOTION.
BUT NOW HE FINDS HIMSELF A MARC SPECTOR WHO HAS TAKEN ON A MISSION WITHOUT PAY...
...WHO FEELS MORE EMOTION THAT HE HAS EVER KNOWN.
PERHAPS IT'S THE MURDER OF HIS FRIEND BENJAMIN ABRAMOV, OR THE GRIEF OF BEN'S WIDOW...
OR MAYBE IT'S JUST THE HEART-RENDING WAILS OF ALL THE GHOSTS OF JERUSALEM.
WWEEOOOOOO!!
ISRAELI SOLDIERS! SOMETHING'S UP--MAYBE SOMETHING BIG!

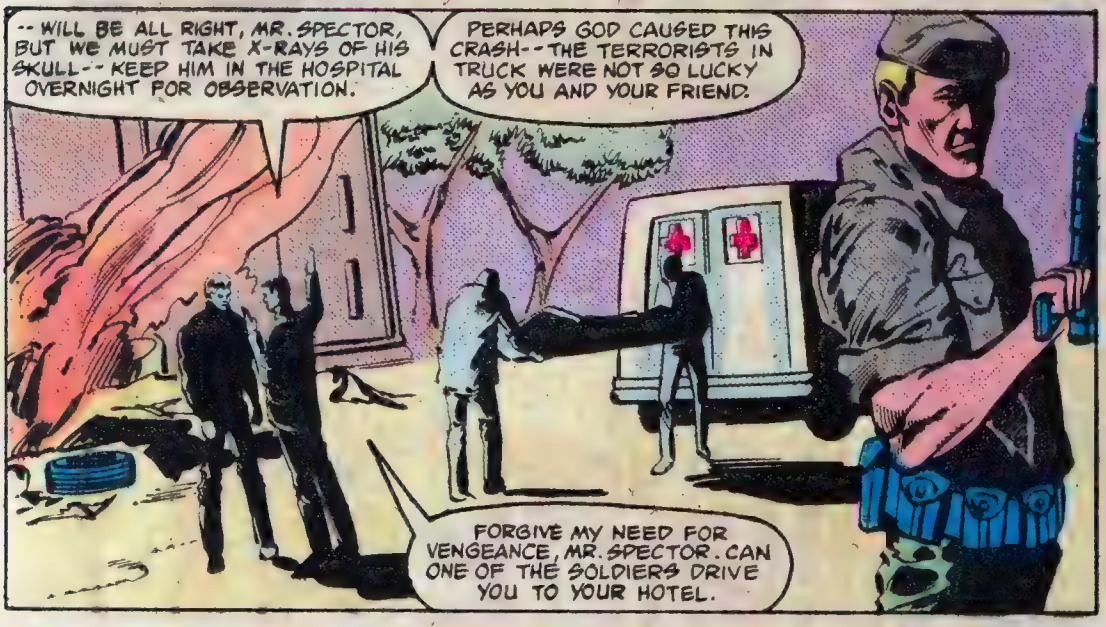

COME ON, FRENCHIE-- WE'LL TAKE THE LAND-ROVER!
WH-WHAT IS IT, MARC?
JUST COME ON! MARLENE-- YOU STAY HERE WITH ANNA! KEEP THE DOORS LOCKED!
BUT, MARC-- WHY ZEE HURRY? WHERE ARE WE GOING?
I DON'T KNOW--I JUST KNOW IT'S SOMETHING BIG, SOMETHING BAD! FOLLOW THOSE ISRAELI TRUCKS, FRENCHIE!
AND THE FEELINGS SLICE DEEPLY, SHARPLY--BUT WHAT IS IT THAT HE FEELS?
SOME EXTRASENSORY PERCEPTION OF THE EMOTION, PERHAPS WHISPERING FROM THE HORROR AT THE SYNAGOGUE--?
KA-BLAM BLAM
WEEOOOOO
CRASH
TERRORISTS--AN ASSAULT ON THE SYNAGOGUE-- THEY SLAUGHTERED THE CONGREGATION-- ESCAPING IN THAT TRUCK!
AND IF WE DO, I'M GOING TO BE READY!
YOU HEAR THAT, FRENCHIE? THERE THEY ARE! MAYBE WE CAN STILL CATCH THEM!
AND MAYBE THIS--MOON KNIGHT-- IS THE REAL AND PROFOUND REASON FOR HIS CHANGE AS SPECTOR.


BUT I DON'T UNDERSTAND, MARLENE. WHY DO YOU SUPPOSE MARC AND FRENCHIE LEFT IN SUCH A--
DON'T WORRY ABOUT THEM, ANNA. STE-MARC CAN TAKE CARE OF HIMSELF. YOU JUST GO AHEAD WITH YOUR CEREMONY.
THAT ONE IN THE BACK, FRENCHIE--HE SEES US!
SWERVE HARD!
SKREEE
BRRRT
OUI, MARC.
KEEP WEAVING, FRENCHIE--DON'T LET HIM HIT US!
BRRRT
GOOD--HE JUST WASTED WHAT WAS LEFT IN HIS CLIP!
NOW, FRENCHIE, BEFORE HE CAN RELOAD--PULL UP NEXT TO HIM!
MOON KNIGHT'S CRESCENT DART FLIES END OVER END, GLITTERING IN THE SILVER LIGHT, AND--
BAMM

SWOKK
BDAM BDAM BDAM BDAM
BRATATATA
HEH HEH H--
--HAHH?
WHUP!
LOOK OUT, FRENCHIE! IT'S STARTING TO FISHTAIL -- I CAN'T CONTROL IT!
SKDAMM
KUNCH


FRENCHIE--!
KRAMM
FWOOM
FRENCHIE!!
BRIGHT AS AN EXPLOSION NOW, THE EMOTION BECOMES A LIVING THING CRAWLING UNDER HIS SKIN, EATING AT HIS GUT...
FIRST BEN ABRAMOV, AND NOW--NO, IT CAN'T BE TRUE! IT'S NOT POSSIBLE!
FRENCHIE IS HIS CLOSEST FRIEND, A LINK TO A BAD PAST SURVIVED TOGETHER, A MAN HE LOVES. HE CAN'T BE DEAD! HE CAN'T BE--
NO... HE'S NOT... HE'S ALIVE...
... THANK GOD.
AN AMBULANCE COMING!
BETTER CHANGE BACK TO SPECTOR FAST!
CELEBRATION OF SABBATH CONCLUDES WITH THE HAVDALA OR "DISTINCTION" CEREMONY.
IT CONSISTS OF A BENEDICTION NOTING THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN SABBATH AND WEEKDAY, USUALLY RECITED OVER A CUP OF WINE ACCOMPANIED BY A SPICE BOX AND CANDLE.
AND, FOR A BRIEF INTERLUDE, ANNA ABRAMOV'S GRIEF MELTS AWAY UNDER A SOFT GLOW OF PEACE...


...A VERY BRIEF INTERLUDE.
MMPHH!
MARLENE! WHAT IS--
AND JOU-JOUKA, SLAYER ELITE, SMILES...


--WILL BE ALL RIGHT, MR. SPECTOR, BUT WE MUST TAKE X-RAYS OF HIS SKULL--KEEP HIM IN THE HOSPITAL OVERNIGHT FOR OBSERVATION.
PERHAPS GOD CAUSED THIS CRASH--THE TERRORISTS IN TRUCK WERE NOT SO LUCKY AS YOU AND YOUR FRIEND.
FORGIVE MY NEED FOR VENGEANCE, MR. SPECTOR. CAN ONE OF THE SOLDIERS DRIVE YOU TO YOUR HOTEL.

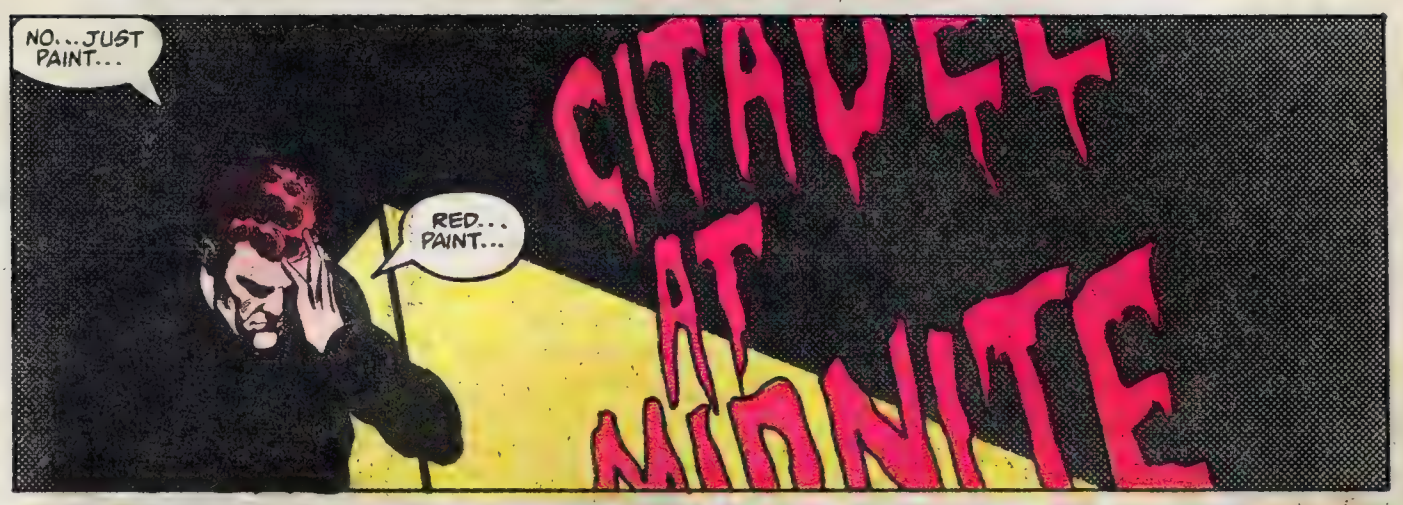
THANKS, BUT I'M STAYING WITH A FRIEND--HER HOME IS NOT FAR AWAY.
I'LL WALK.

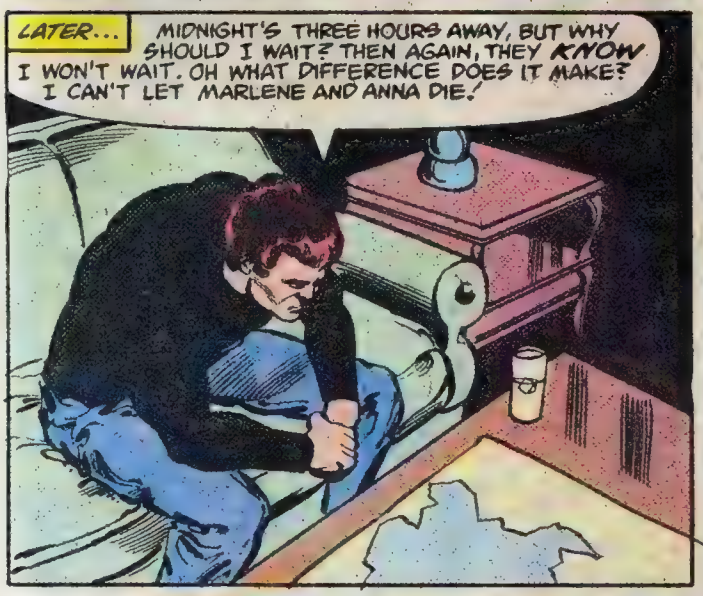
AND AT THE END OF THAT LONELY WALK...
ANNA...?

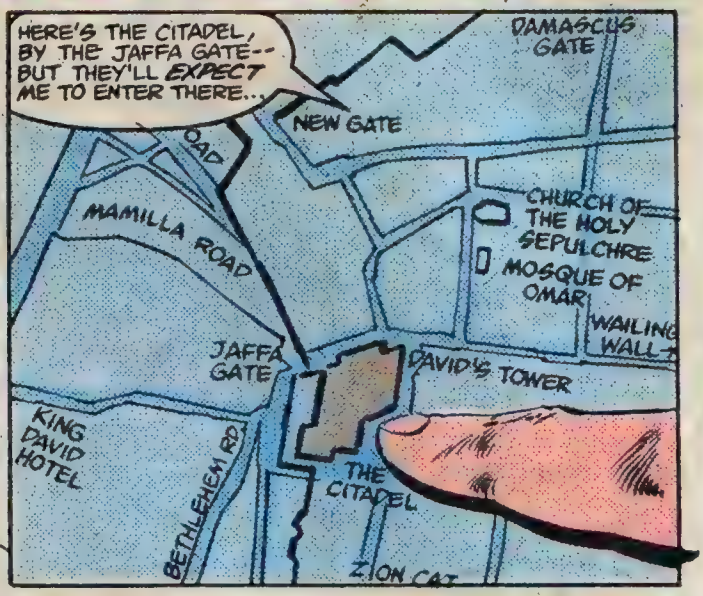
THE DOOR SWINGS OPEN AND THE EMOTION, SO RECENTLY BROUGHT UNDER CONTROL, RISES UP LIKE A BEAST ON HIS BACK...
ANNA? MARLENE--?

HE ENTERS, LOOKING UP AND THE HUNCHING BEAST SINKS ITS FANGS INTO HIS EYES.
OH NO... NO...

AWWWOOO
COME TO THE CITADEL AT MIDNITE
OOOO
B-BLOOD...?
S-SO MUCH OF IT...ANNA'S... AND MARLENE'S...?
LIE
BLOOD--?

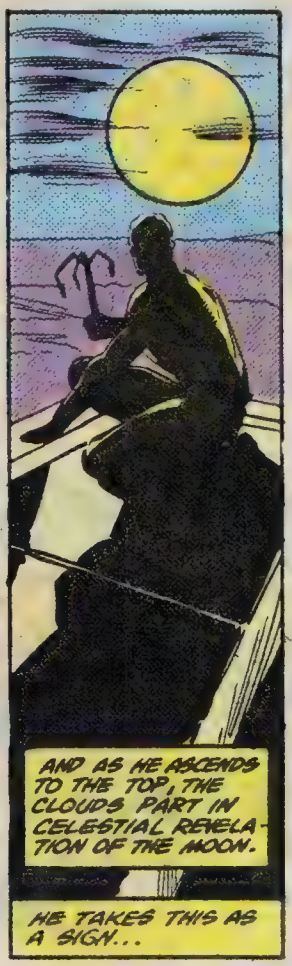

NO...JUST PAINT...
RED... PAINT...
CITADEL AT MIDNITE


LATER...
MIDNIGHT'S THREE HOURS AWAY, BUT WHY SHOULD I WAIT? THEN AGAIN, THEY KNOW I WON'T WAIT. OH WHAT DIFFERENCE DOES IT MAKE? I CAN'T LET MARLENE AND ANNA DIE!

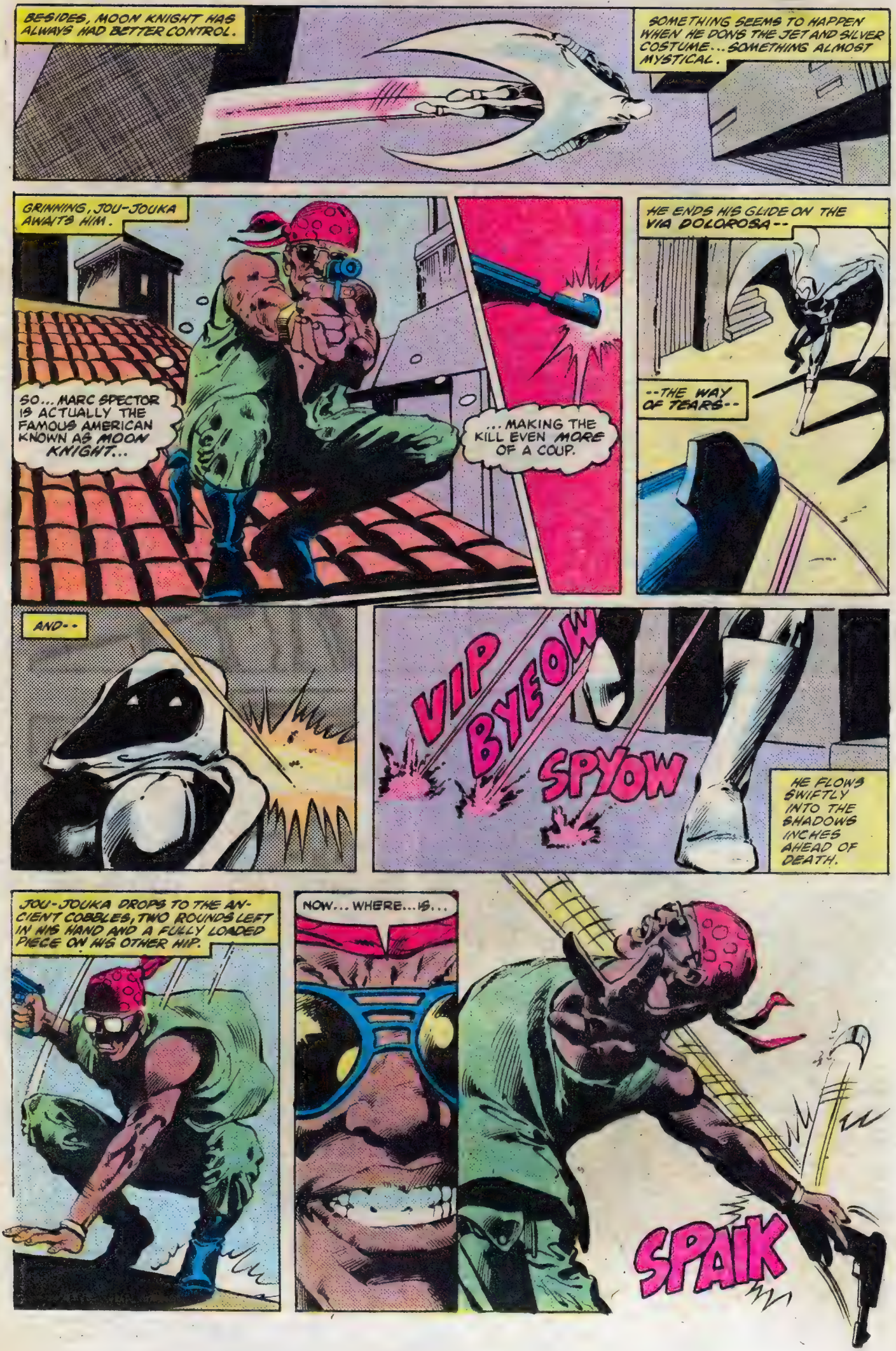

HERE'S THE CITADEL, BY THE JAFFA GATE-- BUT THEY'LL EXPECT ME TO ENTER THERE...
DAMASCUS GATE
NEW GATE
MAMILLA ROAD
CHURCH OF THE HOLY SEPULCHRE
MOSQUE OF OMAR
WAILING WALL
JAFFA GATE
DAVID'S TOWER
KING DAVID HOTEL
BETHLEHEM RD
THE CITADEL
ZION GAT

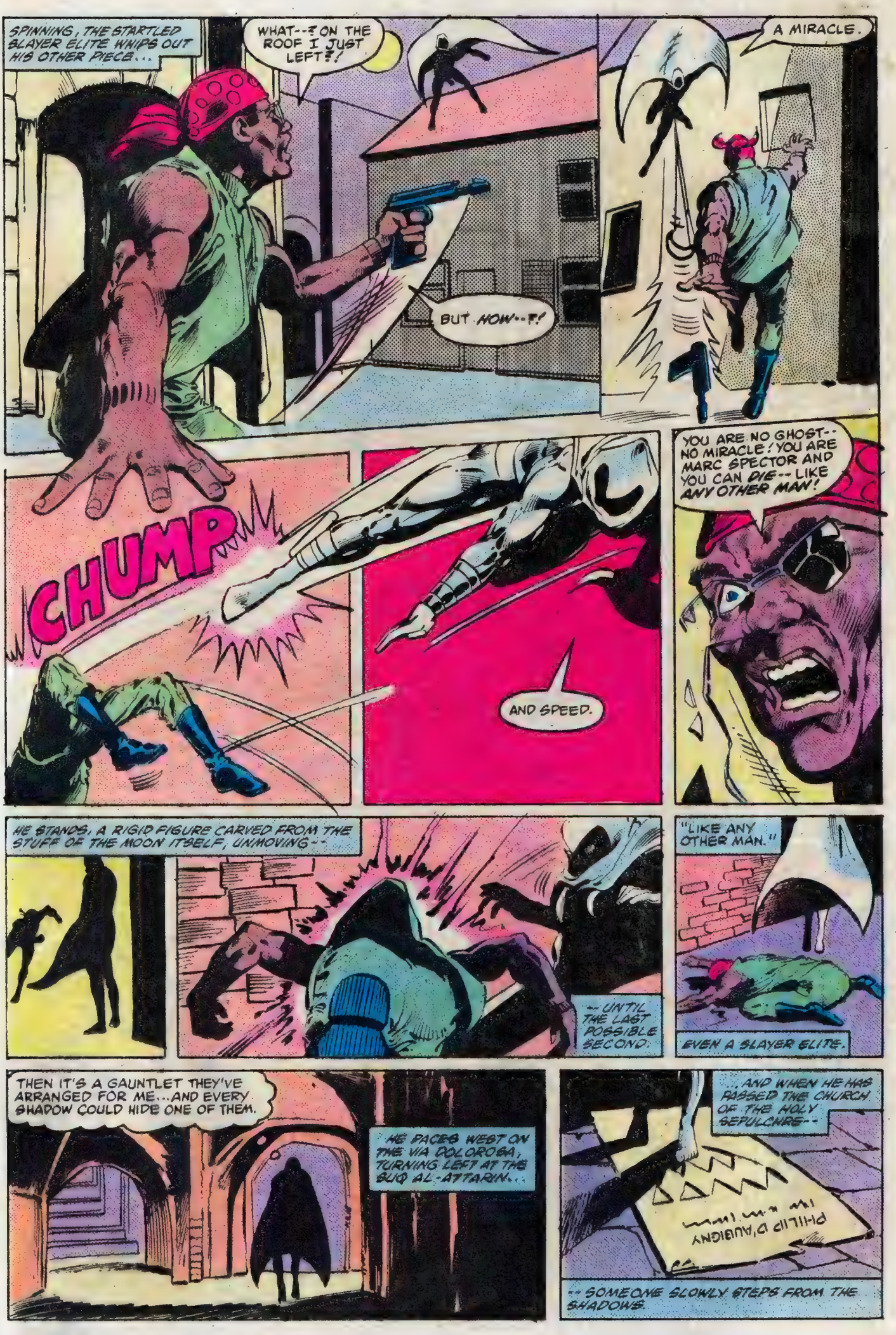
SO I'LL ENTER THE OLD WALLED CITY HERE, FROM THE EAST...
LION'S (ST. STEPHEN'S) GATE (VIA DOLOROSA)
SOLOMON'S THRONE
GOLDEN GATE
TEMPLE AREA
DOME OF THE ROCK
WAILING WALL
ISLAMIC MUSEUM
MOSQUE OF OMAR
...AND MAKE MY WAY WEST TO THE CITADEL.
DAVID'S
THE CITADEL

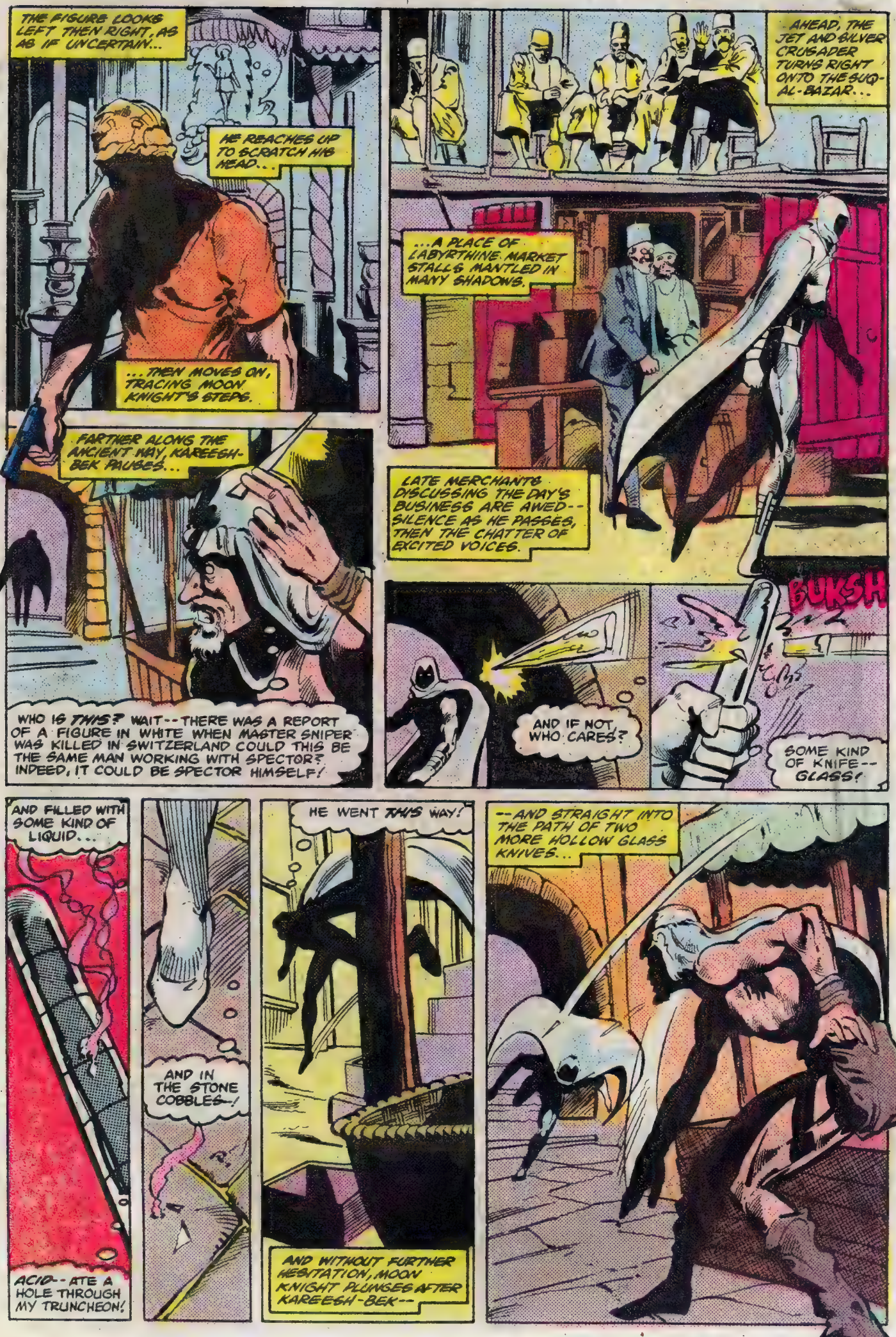
TWENTY MINUTES LATER, UNDER A THICKLY CLOUDED SKY...
COME TO THINK OF IT, THEY MAY HAVE AN AMBUSH AT EVERY GATE.
BETTER TO USE THE GRAPPLING HOOK IN MOON KNIGHT'S TRUNCHEON--SCALE THE WALL BETWEEN GATES.


AND AS HE ASCENDS TO THE TOP, THE CLOUDS PART IN CELESTIAL REVELATION OF THE MOON.
HE TAKES THIS AS A SIGN...

...AND BECOMES THE OTHER.
NEITHER SPECTOR, NEW NOR OLD, WILL DO.


BESIDES, MOON KNIGHT HAS ALWAYS HAD BETTER CONTROL.
SOMETHING SEEMS TO HAPPEN WHEN HE DONS THE JET AND SILVER COSTUME... SOMETHING ALMOST MYSTICAL.
GRINNING, JOU-JOUKA AWAITS HIM.
SO... MARC SPECTOR IS ACTUALLY THE FAMOUS AMERICAN KNOWN AS MOON KNIGHT...
... MAKING THE KILL EVEN MORE OF A COUP.
HE ENDS HIS GLIDE ON THE VIA DOLOROSA--
--THE WAY OF TEARS--
AND--
VIP
BYEOW
SPYOW
HE FLOWS SWIFTLY INTO THE SHADOWS INCHES AHEAD OF DEATH.
JOU-JOUKA DROPS TO THE ANCIENT COBBLES, TWO ROUNDS LEFT IN HIS HAND AND A FULLY LOADED PIECE ON HIS OTHER HIP.
NOW... WHERE... IS...
SPAIK


SPINNING, THE STARTLED SLAYER ELITE WHIPS OUT HIS OTHER PIECE...
WHAT--? ON THE ROOF I JUST LEFT?!
BUT HOW--?!
A MIRACLE.
CHUMP
AND SPEED.
YOU ARE NO GHOST--NO MIRACLE! YOU ARE MARC SPECTOR AND YOU CAN DIE--LIKE ANY OTHER MAN!
HE STANDS, A RIGID FIGURE CARVED FROM THE STUFF OF THE MOON ITSELF, UNMOVING--
--UNTIL THE LAST POSSIBLE SECOND.
"LIKE ANY OTHER MAN."
EVEN A SLAYER ELITE.
THEN IT'S A GAUNTLET THEY'VE ARRANGED FOR ME...AND EVERY SHADOW COULD HIDE ONE OF THEM.
HE FACES WEST ON THE VIA DOLOROSA, TURNING LEFT AT THE SUQ AL-ATTARIN...
...AND WHEN HE HAS PASSED THE CHURCH OF THE HOLY SEPULCHRE--
PHILIP D'AUBIGNY
--SOMEONE SLOWLY STEPS FROM THE SHADOWS.


THE FIGURE LOOKS LEFT THEN RIGHT, AS AS IF UNCERTAIN...
HE REACHES UP TO SCRATCH HIS HEAD...
...THEN MOVES ON, TRACING MOON KNIGHT'S STEPS.
FARTHER ALONG THE ANCIENT WAY, KAREEGH-BEK PAUSES...
WHO IS THIS? WAIT--THERE WAS A REPORT OF A FIGURE IN WHITE WHEN MASTER SNIPER WAS KILLED IN SWITZERLAND COULD THIS BE THE SAME MAN WORKING WITH SPECTOR? INDEED, IT COULD BE SPECTOR HIMSELF!
AHEAD, THE JET AND SILVER CRUSADER TURNS RIGHT ONTO THE SUQ-AL-BAZAR...
...A PLACE OF LABYRTHINE MARKET STALLS MANTLED IN MANY SHADOWS.
LATE MERCHANTS DISCUSSING THE DAY'S BUSINESS ARE AWED--SILENCE AS HE PASSES, THEN THE CHATTER OF EXCITED VOICES.
AND IF NOT, WHO CARES?
BUKSH
SOME KIND OF KNIFE--GLASS!
AND FILLED WITH SOME KIND OF LIQUID...
ACID--ATE A HOLE THROUGH MY TRUNCHEON!
AND IN THE STONE COBBLES--!
HE WENT THIS WAY!
AND WITHOUT FURTHER HESITATION, MOON KNIGHT PLUNGES AFTER KAREEGH-BEK--
--AND STRAIGHT INTO THE PATH OF TWO MORE HOLLOW GLASS KNIVES...

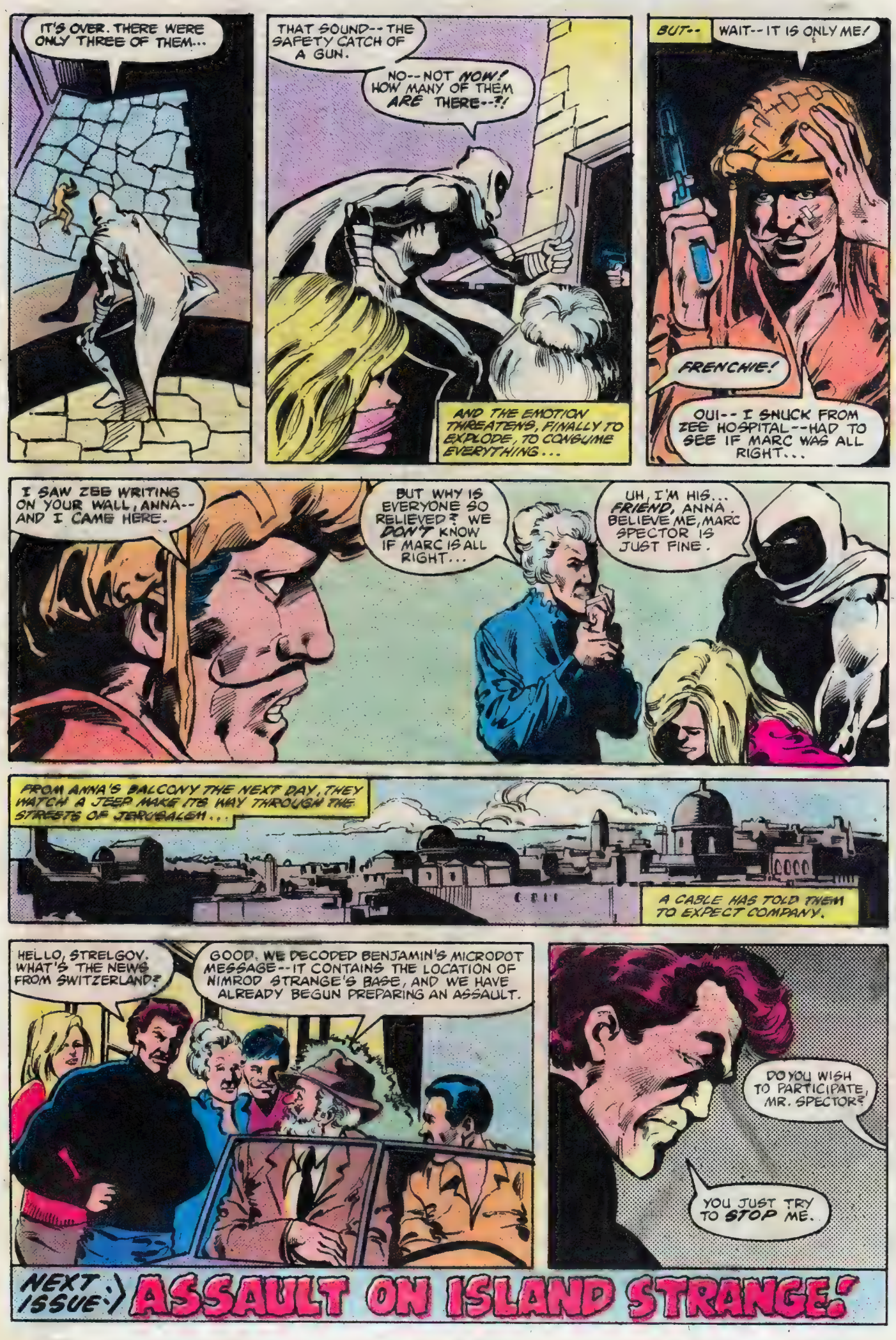
GOOD--THEY PASSED THROUGH MY CAPE WITH-OUT BREAKING!
SHRIPP
RIPP
AND ONCE MY TRUNCHEON OPENS INTO NUNCHAKS--
--THAT'S MORE THAN I CAN SAY FOR HIS NEXT KNIFE!
SPASH
HAH! YOU ARE QUICK, WHITE ONE, BUT I HAVE MANY KNIVES!
SOONER OR LATER, ONE OF THEM WILL FIND THE MARK.
KASH
THE KNIFE DOES INDEED FINDS ITS MARK--BUT IT IS MOON KNIGHT'S MARK...
SSSS
AND AS THE AWNING POLE IS SLOWLY EATEN AWAY...
KRATCH
HWOK
...THE STRUT FINALLY SNAPS...
...AND FINDS ITS MARK.

KERUNCHH
NINETEEN HOLLOW GLASS KNIVES REMAINED ON KAREESH-BEK'S BANDOLIERS, EACH FILLED WITH CORROSIVE ACID...
...AND EVERY ONE SHATTERED BY THE WEIGHT OF HIS FALLING BODY.
TWO OF THEM, NOW CLAIMED BY THEIR OWN MURDEROUS INTENT.
MOON KNIGHT PASSES ON...
...OUT OF VIEW...
...BEFORE THE SHADOWY FIGURE ENTERS THE BAZAAR TO STUDY THE SLAIN SLAYER, AND TO PONDER HIS NEXT MOVE.
FINALLY, THE CITADEL--WITH ITS RAMPARTS AND TOWER OF DAVID...
MOON KNIGHT ENTERS ON THE RUN.
EVEN UNDER THE PROTECTION OF HIS SILVER GUISE, HE HAS MERELY HELD THE EMOTION AT BAY.
IT WOULD LIKE TO SEIZE AND SHAKE HIM, AND ONLY THE GRIMNESS OF THE SITUATION KEEPS HIM ONE STEP AHEAD OF IT...
NOW HE LOSES THAT STEP--
--AND STUMBLES--
--OVER A BODY.
THE WATCHMAN! THERE WAS NO NEED TO KILL HIM--
OTHER EMOTIONS NOW: DISGUST AND LOATHING AND FEAR...
FEAR FOR MARLENE AND ANNA. IF THESE ASSASSINS CAN DO THIS TO AN INNOCENT WATCHMAN--
AGH-H!!

STRUGGLE, LITTLE MAN!
YOU HAVE FIVE SECONDS TO LIVE!
AND THE HANDS OF SUMARO--THE THIRD SLAYER ELITE--TWIST AND TIGHTEN ON THE GARROTE...
CHUDD
OOOPH!
GOT TO... CLEAR MY HEAD... BEFORE HE...
TOO LATE! NOTHING TO DO BUT ROLL BACK--TRY TO ABSORB MOST OF THE BLOW GOING AWAY..
SWOKTT
... PREPARE A SWIFT COUNTER-STRIKE...

BUT THE TRUNCHEON SHATTERS--WEAKENED BY THE ACID HOLE...
OWOOOOO!!
STILL, IT'S ENOUGH TO SEND THE GIANT HOWLING UP THE STAIRS...
...ONTO THE ROOF OF THE TOWER...
...AND STRAIGHT FOR HIS HOSTAGES...
CAN'T CATCH HIM IN TIME--HE'S GOING TO GRAB ONE OF THEM!
PICK MARLENE, YOU BIG OX! SHE'LL STUFF A BOOT DOWN YOUR THROAT! PICK HER, PICK HER, PICK HER...
PICK MARLENE...!
BUT SUMARO HAS HIS OWN PREFERENCE...
HALT, LITTLE MAN!--OR I SNAP THE WOMAN'S NECK LIKE A ROTTEN TWIG!
NO! HE PICKED THE WRONG ONE! THERE'S NO HOPE NOW...!

BELOW, THE SHADOWY FIGURE ENTERS THE CITADEL, PASSES THE BODY OF THE WATCHMAN...
...AND HEADS FOR THE STAIRS.
I AM SERIOUS, LITTLE MAN! ONE STEP CLOSER AND I TAKE HER HEAD OFF!
PLEASE, ANNA, BE CALM-- DON'T MOVE...
DON'T DO ANYTHING TO GIVE HIM CAUSE TO HURT YOU.
BUT ANNA ABRAMOV'S EYES BLAZE AND IF SHE COULD SPEAK THIS IS WHAT SHE WOULD SAY: "DON'T DO ANYTHING--?! WHEN THIS IS ONE OF THE MEN WHO KILLED MY HUSBAND BENJAMIN--?!
"WHAT DO YOU TAKE ME FOR? A HELPLESS OLD WOMAN?!"
AND THEN--
KRAK
SWAKT
HWOK
MOON KNIGHT HOLDS ON.
SUMARO DOES NOT.


IT'S OVER. THERE WERE ONLY THREE OF THEM...
THAT SOUND-- THE SAFETY CATCH OF A GUN.
NO--NOT NOW! HOW MANY OF THEM ARE THERE--?!
AND THE EMOTION THREATENS, FINALLY TO EXPLODE, TO CONSUME EVERYTHING...
BUT--
WAIT--IT IS ONLY ME!
FRENCHIE!
OUI--I SNUCK FROM ZEE HOSPITAL--HAD TO SEE IF MARC WAS ALL RIGHT...
I SAW ZEE WRITING ON YOUR WALL, ANNA-- AND I CAME HERE.
BUT WHY IS EVERYONE SO RELIEVED? WE DON'T KNOW IF MARC IS ALL RIGHT...
UH, I'M HIS... FRIEND, ANNA. BELIEVE ME, MARC SPECTOR IS JUST FINE.
FROM ANNA'S BALCONY THE NEXT DAY, THEY WATCH A JEEP MAKE ITS WAY THROUGH THE STREETS OF JERUSALEM...
A CABLE HAS TOLD THEM TO EXPECT COMPANY.
HELLO, STRELGOV. WHAT'S THE NEWS FROM SWITZERLAND?
GOOD. WE DECODED BENJAMIN'S MICRODOT MESSAGE--IT CONTAINS THE LOCATION OF NIMROD STRANGE'S BASE, AND WE HAVE ALREADY BEGUN PREPARING AN ASSAULT.
DO YOU WISH TO PARTICIPATE, MR. SPECTOR?
YOU JUST TRY TO STOP ME.
NEXT ISSUE:
ASSAULT ON ISLAND STRANGE!

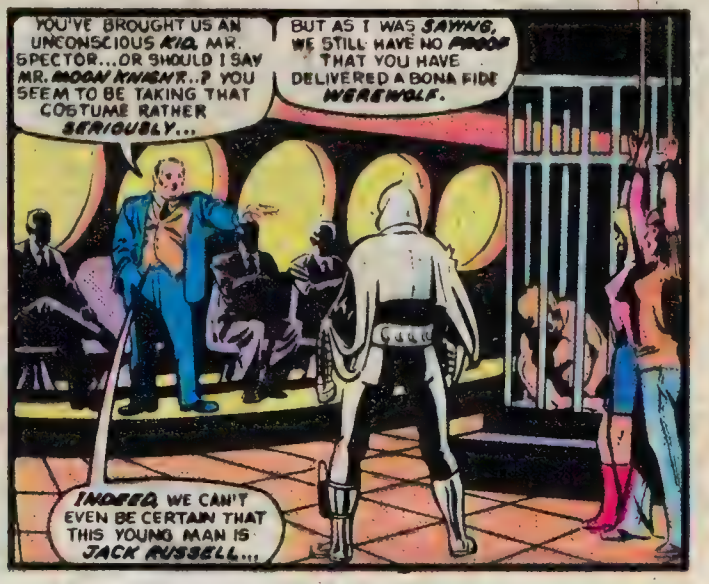
The Many Phases of MOON KNIGHT

Allen Zelenetz

Moon Knight was born into the Marvel Universe in August of 1975. During the ensuing six years he has grown into a hero unique not so much in the complexity of his character as in the way this man of many faces explores the hidden faces of others. Indeed, just as he has mastered gliding the city streets with Daredevil abandon, Moon Knight has learned to wend his way about the human psyche with calculated, Freudian ease. Yep, pretty fancy stuff for a fellow who started his comics career as a "villain" hired to bag a werewolf.

Huh? Bag a werewolf? Villain? What? When? Where? How? Who? Don't worry. We haven't forgotten that there are some of you out there who only know our hero in his present incarnation, and so, just to fill you in, we've put together this jet and silver survey. As for those already dyed-in-the-cowl Lunaphiles ("Lunatics" won't do, and "Moonies" is sure as Shooter out of the question), everything's been put in chronological order, and we've tossed in our night crusader's cameos and guest appearances past and present to make things complete. So, read on...

The Moon Knight's first appearance ever came in a two-part *Werewolf by Night* (#32-33, August-September 1975). Introduced by Doug Moench as "The Stalker Called Moon Knight," he had been hired as Marc Spector, mercenary, by a criminal group, The Committee, to capture a "pet" werewolf to commit murders of convenience for them. The Committee's apparent responsibility for the creation of the Moon Knight persona (referred to later as "the false origin") as well as the darker slant given Moon Knight and Frenchie — who kidnaps the werewolf's innocent sister at gunpoint! — raised a number of questions that were finally resolved in *Moon Knight #4*. The explanation given there is that this "false origin" actually took place after the real

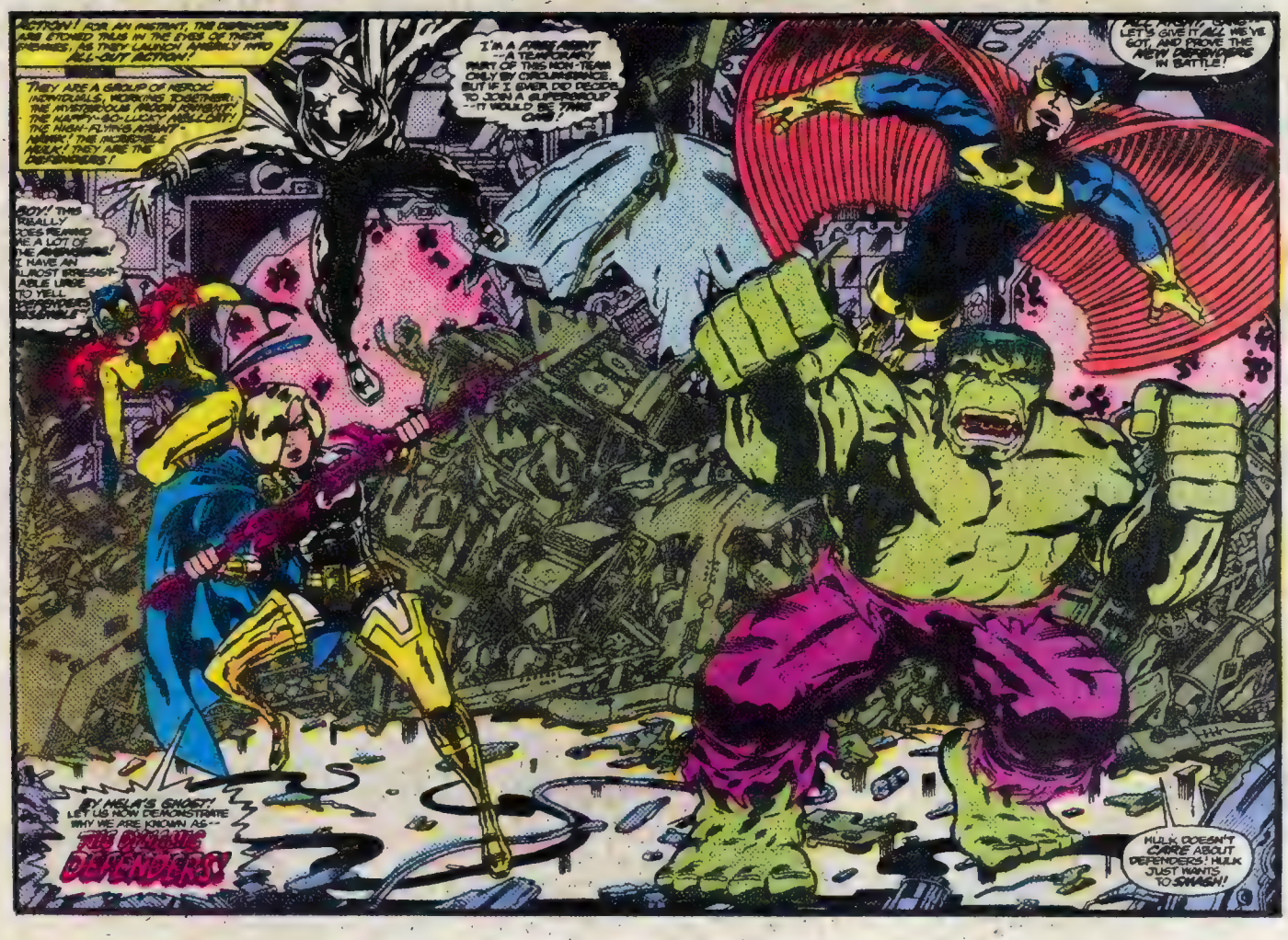


origin (*Moon Knight #1*, Nov. 1980) and that Frenchie rigged the Moon Knight "creation" by infiltrating The Committee. (So although this episode comes first, it actually comes later. Got that? Remember, we're here to enlighten.)

The "relentless Moon Knight" did and did not appear (huh?) one last time in Jack Russell's life in *Werewolf By Night #37* (March 1976). Well, there he was on the cover along with the Hangman and Dr. Glitternight, but inside it was revealed that this Moon Knight was only a demon image coalesced from the blood of Russell's foe, Belaric Marcusa, and handily defeated by the harried werewolf.

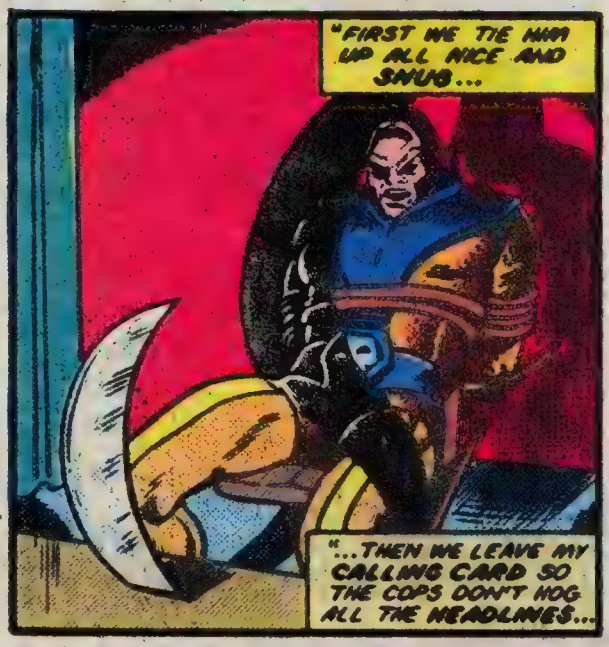
Later that year, Marvel turned its *Spotlight* onto the shimmering shadow adventurer in a two parter (#28-29, June-August 1976) which involved Moon Knight — now firmly established as one of the good guys — against "The Crushing Conquer-Lord," a villainous crazy out to assassinate the mayor and control the city. It was clear there were hopes in the air for the mysterious night avenger, and the panorama of his past as well as the growing parade of supporting characters promised a glittering future career. Here for the first time Jake Lockley and Steven Grant appeared and here the "schizo-identity" theme was introduced. Marlene, Gena, Crawley and Samuel the butler all entered the cast. The cloak as glider-sail. A cowl intercom. The Long Island Mansion. A rooftop heliport. Ah! The possibilities...

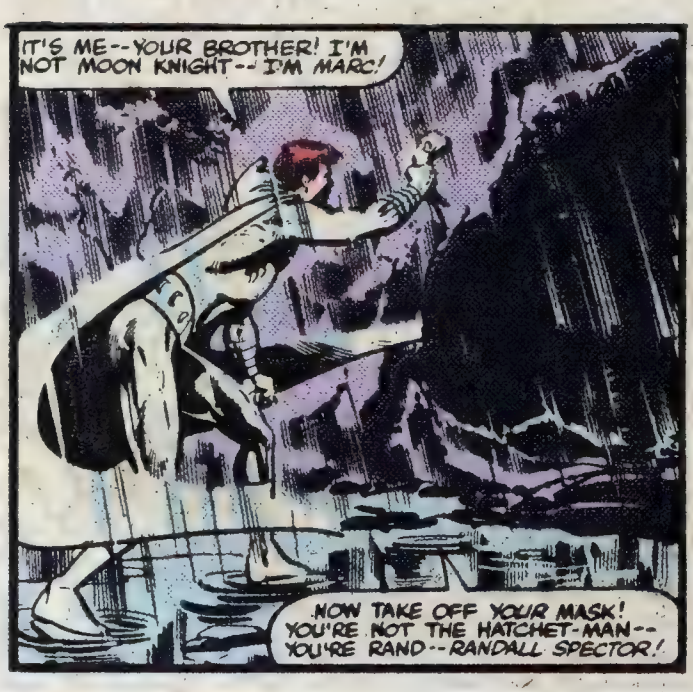
But the possibilities remained just so for a season. The Moon Knight, eclipsed for a year, did not shine again until August 1977. He re-appeared on the scene as a non-member of the non-team *Defenders* in a four-part story scripted by David Kraft (#47-50, May-August 1977). Gliding now into the mainstream of the Marvel Universe, Moon Knight visited the mansions of Dr. Strange and the Avengers, and joined Hellcat, Valkyrie, Nighthawk and Wonder Man against the sinister Scorpio. He even made the brief acquaintance of a jolly emerald giant known as Hulk. (Boy, that's an understatement for a chase scene with



Moonie on the run from a rampaging green goliath off whose hide crescent darts "poink" pitifully!) In issue #51, Moon Knight, already off the cover, helped mop up and took his leave.

Then another year-long eclipse and finally some real action. Our dynamic man of the moon danced back onto center stage with a web-swinging partner named *Peter Parker the Spectacular Spider-Man* to the tune of "By the Light of the Silvery Moon Knight" (#22-23, Sept.-Oct. 1978). Bill Mantlo composed this duet for super-heroes in which Moonie and Spidey met for the first time and got to know each other (No, they didn't shake hands — they slugged it out! After all, Spidey didn't know what the Moon Knight looked like, so when they collided over the same criminal he could only assume "white eyes" was in cahoots). Joining forces against the Big M and his continental cat's paw Cyclone, Moonie brought webhead home and led him through the Command Center War Room of his mansion. No sharing of secret identities, however.

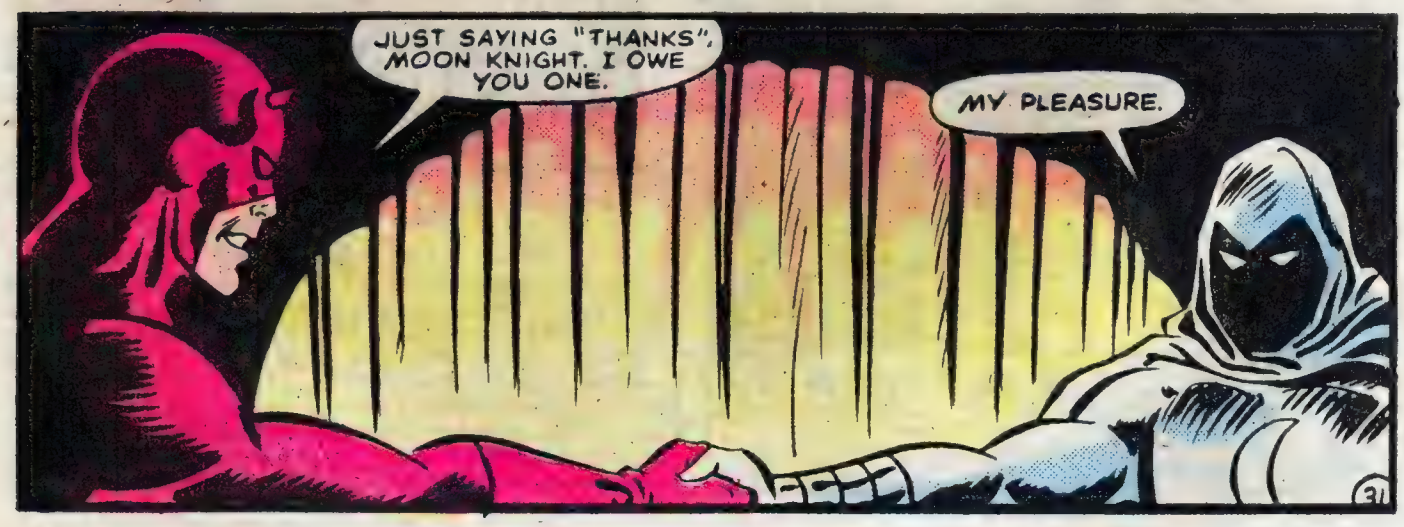




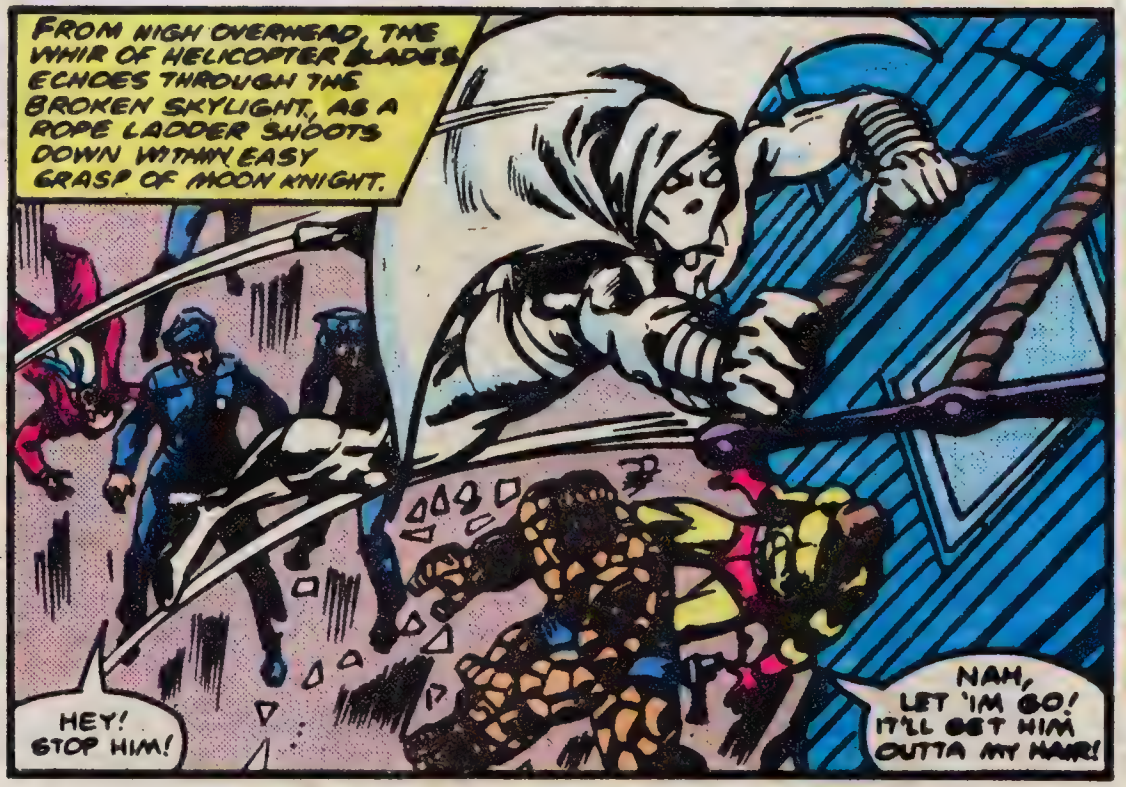
At the same time Moon Knight began a series of back-up solos in the colorful *Hulk* magazine #11 (Oct. 1978). The "false origin" was repeated in the issue's editorial, and an alternate one-word spelling — "Moonknight" — was adopted on the editorial pages and remained so until #17. Doug Moench took up the writing reins once again and spurred on the moon's avenging knight through a four-part intrigue involving murder, a missing statuette, and a terrorist plot. Behind it all, Lupinar the man-wolf who, underneath that hirsute hide, wanted nothing

more than a little attention from Moon Knight. In *Hulk #12*, Marlene redesigned the crusader's cape for greater dramatic flair and just in time for the professional debut of Bill Sienkiewicz (who has since gone on to become the definitive renderer of the *Moon Knight* cast and crew).

After the defeat of Lupinar, *Hulk #15* (June 1979) afforded comic relief in the form of a vacationing Moon Knight unexpectedly delivered up to a thing that went HULK in the night... and speaking of Things, Moonie did a side-step into *Two-In-One #52* along about this time. But *Hulk #17* returned to what was fast becoming the definition of the series, a taut thriller in which Moon Knight was led not only through the maze of the night city, its al-



leys and streets, but through and about the human psyche as well. Villains whose criminal intents went beyond the motives of greed and power and whose actions stemmed from the deepest recesses of memory, pain and anxiety became a hallmark of the series. In the two-part "Night Born Ten Years Gone" (#17-18, Oct.-Dec. 1979) Moon Knight confronted his own brother, Randall Spector, whose sibling rivalry from "years gone" had led him

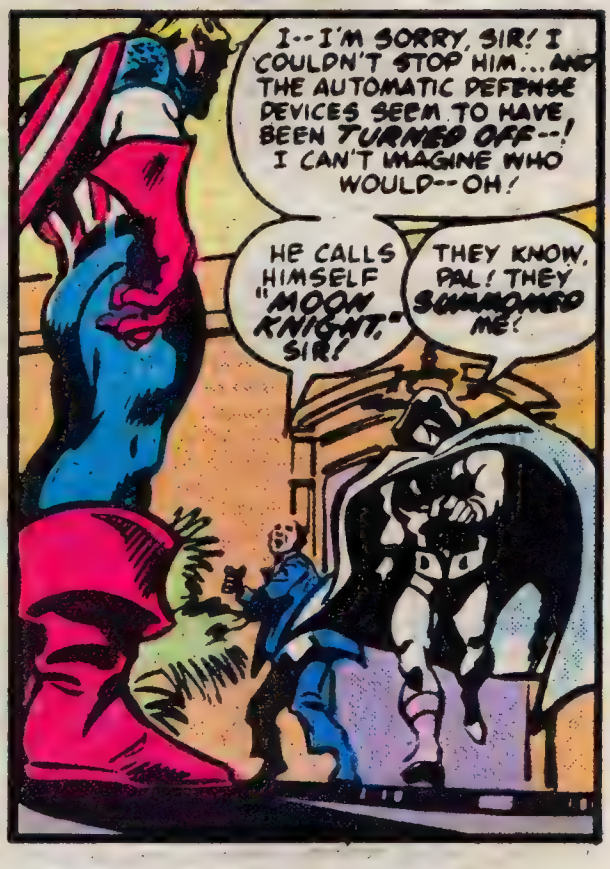


on a wild-eyed, irrational trail of murder after his brother Marc (establishing here, perhaps once and for all, the rock bottom real identity of Moon Knight). *Hulk #20* featured his final back-up appearance in a near stream-of-consciousness piece playing the mind of Moon Knight off against the moods of the city by night.

Marvel Preview #21 (Spring 1980) followed with a full-length Moon Knight tale in moody black and white. "Mind Thieves" was a cloak and crescent mystery involving Operation Cobra, an illegal mind-control unit Marc Spector once worked for in his Company days. After a humorous cameo in *Captain America #245* (May 1980) in which cabbie Jake Lockley gave the Cap an off-the-meter lift into Brooklyn, Jake-Steven-Marc-Moonie took off for a well-deserved summer vacation. After all he was due back in November as star of his own four-color comic, *Moon Knight #1*.

Oh yes, we promised to be complete. Well then, here are the appearances MK has made since his own title began. In *Fantastic Four #227* (Feb. 1981) — quick, look! — there's a one panel glimpse of an incomplete Moon Knight statue in Alicia Masters' sculpting studio. *FF #229* shows the completed work. *Marvel Team-Up Annual #4* (1981) brought Moonie together with Spidey again and with Iron Fist, Power Man and Daredevil for the first time around. In *Avengers #211* (Sept. 1981) Moon Knight revisited Avengers' Mansion, summoned against his will by Moondragon for the changing of the old guard. In *Amazing Spider-Man #220* of the same month Moonie and Spidey took on the National Crime Directorate. And, finally, Moonie recently glided across one panel of *ROM #23* (Oct. 1981) searching for a Bugle headlined "Alien Menace."

It's been an exciting six years and, what with the additions of Bushman, the Midnight Man, Morpheus, and the Jester, we've only just begun. Here's looking towards a thousand-and-one-knights' entertainment from the man of many phases, the mysterious Moon Knight.



KNIGHT MAIL

c/o MARVEL COMICS GROUP
575 Madison Avenue
New York, New York 10022

DENNIS O'NEIL
EDITOR
RALPH MACCHIO
ASSISTANT EDITOR

Yowsa, yowsa, yowsa! Step right up for the Magical Missive Tour — another double-sized bonanza of reader scribblings courtesy of our new and expanded 32-page format!

Doug and Bill,

MOON KNIGHT #14 hit some nerves. It struck the "depressed and ready to give up" side in me. It's not often that I empathize with an entire book, but I can honestly say that I "felt" this story as much as I read it. The loneliness, the emptiness, the despair, were made all the more real by my own experiences. But I won't go into that...

Instead, let me just say that it was good to see the quiet moments between Marlene and Steven. For some reason, the scene reminded me of October, as did entire book.

Doug, as usual, you've proven in this story why I consider you to be one of the top three writers currently producing comicbooks. Your strong suits are characterization and subtlety, and I can find no faults in your work whatsoever.

Bill, what can I say in print that I haven't already said to you in person on several occasions? Your work is always a joy. Dynamic layouts, superb use of shadows, extremely emotive faces and figures.

MOON KNIGHT has it all.

John A. Wilcox
40 Hales Court
Westport, CT 06880

Dear Doug:

This letter is a long time in comin', so bear with me. For the past fourteen issues, Moon Knight has been like a trusted friend. My need for his adventures seemed to neatly — magically — coincide with the release of each issue. Sometimes I could almost "feel" a new issue on the stands before I even got there.

But for the three issues prior to #14, I'd begun to feel that the character was being abused, not given material befitting his stature or mystic nature. In fact, I had almost given up. Then along came "Stained Glass Scarlet."

I am a teacher of Special Ed./Bilingual kids in the South Bronx. I love my children and am only too aware of the sordid conditions surrounding them, laughingly referred to as an "environment." I know that Scarlet walks those and many other streets. The night after John Lennon was killed, I sang outside the Dakota. My favorite song that night was "In My Life." We have, each of us, cried our tears seperately, but your story brought our sorrow and hope together. For this, and for your fine work on my favorite Marvel character, I sincerely thank you.

Gary J. Moore
8-06 149th St.
Whitestone, NY 11357

Dear Doug and Bill,

I've been reading comics for about fifteen years, the Marvel stuff almost exhaustively for about nine. This is the second letter I've written (the first, when I was about eight and didn't know any better, was to *Justice League*). Kudos to everyone involved on MOON KNIGHT #14. Being a great fan of telescopes, dark churches, and chess, I fell for Scarlet immediately. (I notice she likes the hypermodern chess players... but who is Ritter-Rebil anyhow?)

Doug, your "oriental detachment" works even better here than in MASTER OF KUNG FU. Bill — not sure what it is about your stuff — economy? Yeah, that's it. You've got the "darknight" mood nailed on this book and (what a refreshing treat) your minor characters all have their own faces.

Finally, Doug, the aside with John Lennon's death could easily have been sloppy and disgusting, but it worked — worked surprisingly well.

M.J. Ferrantino
12 Elmwood Rd.
New Haven, CT 06515

Spell the name of the apocryphal chessmaster "Stirl Ritter-Rebil" backwards — sorta — and you get "Fritz Leiber, Writer," one of the best fantasists who has ever lived, as well as a fancier of cats, telescopes, rooftops, chess, and several other items gracing "Stained Glass Scarlet" — a story Doug wrote in homage to Fritz.

Dear Doug,

MOON KNIGHT #14 was, overall, a very well-written issue. However, there was one aspect of the story which rubbed me the wrong way, an aspect which can be stated in one word: Guns.

Apparently you were a big fan of John Lennon and were deeply affected by his death. While I favor a different style of music, I too was shocked and saddened by the murder and can understand the emotions you must have felt and which you reflected through Moon Knight and Marlene. Still, as a dedicated and conscientious gun-owner, I was offended by the seeming implication that the madness which resulted in this tragedy can be directly attributed to guns. Guns are ultimately nothing more than tools which can be used for either good or bad, depending on whose finger lies on the trigger. Perhaps the gun did have some influence upon Lennon's slayer; but in my case, as well as thousands of others, guns (or rather the upbringing and training around them) have resulted in our being upstanding citizens and better human beings. At least, we strive for those ideals.

Please, Doug, don't blame guns (and thus, gun-owners) for the sickness of violence permeating our society. Doing so is tantamount to sticking one's head in the sand rather than facing up to the real socioeconomic causes. It is also qute unfair to the legitimate gun-owner.

Reed Cockrell
Room 334, Hugunin Hall
725 W Main St.
Platteville, Wi 53818

Dear Moon-People:

MOON KNIGHT #15 was terrific! This new format change is great, too. What's a measly extra 15 ¢ when compared with more story, brilliant behind-the-scenes anecdotes, and a double letters page? Nothing I say!

This was one of your more bizarre MK stories to date, Doug. Putting the army uniforms on those rats was a brilliant touch, and the twist ending worked; I really didn't expect Sgt. Gwenn to be Xenos.

Does Moon Knight have any supernatural powers at all? I ask the question because if he (or Spector) really did die in #1, then he might have been granted other powers — as well as returned to life — by Khonshu the moon god.

Incidentally, the cover was fantastic. It had an aura of greatness screaming out to every casual browser: "Buy this issue!" And you know something? It was persuasive.

One last question: Since Grant did not exist until Spector became Moon Knight, how could he have become so socially respected in such a short time?

Thanks for a truly great issue!

Dave Schmidt
134 Senator Street
Brooklyn, NY 11220

The question of MK having supernatural powers is still up in the misty air, Dave. He certainly seems to possess more than a cat's complement of extra lives, and some of the stunts he's pulled have been nigh impossible... but then, a four minute mile was once considered impossible and look what today's runners are doing.

Maybe it all comes down to a system of beliefs ("It's all in the mind") — or maybe it simply depends on one's definition of "supernatural" — or, finally, maybe MK really *does* have transcendant powers which he simply hasn't tapped yet. Who knows? (Other than you, if you keep reading...)

As for Grant's socialite contacts, bear in mind that there was a several year hiatus between MK's *Werewolf By Night* and *Marvel Spotlight* appearances. And mucho money, we've heard tell, makes fast friends.

Dear Marvel:

In the face of such thought-provoking stories, I feel the need to express *myself* — in praise of your work on MOON KNIGHT. The melancholy stories you produce leave a deep impression, indeed.

Considering the almost real-life milieu in which Moon Knight operates, I realize why he has no super-powers (other than courage and determination), but I also realize there must be something else which sets him apart from the other heroes. While pondering the editorial words at the conclusion of #15, it became clear that the dis-

tinction at least partially derives from MK's costume and weaponry. I immediately began thinking of ways to increase MK's arsenal while retaining the solemn and gritty style which sets him apart from others.

First of all, his crescent-darts are an original touch; keep them. But you might consider dropping the truncheon; it is too much like Daredevil's billyclub. Bring back those gauntlet-like cestus gloves, but with blunted knuckles rather than spikes. I agree it's hardly heroic to wield weapons that can break your opponent's jaw, but with blunted knuckles MK can quickly, efficiently kayo a foe *without* breaking his jaw, as Iron Man does all the time.

Finally, after noticing how much attention is devoted to MK's glider-cape, I deduced that it must be made out of extremely tough material to support MK's weight while gliding. Why not include an absorption mesh in the cape, thus making it impervious to bullets? Please consider these suggestions — especially the cape, since MK can't keep dodging bullets forever!

James Scrapneck
7 Hooper Place
Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada

All suggestions are always considered, Jim; no need for doubt on that score. Your suggestions in particular have already been discussed by Doug, Bill, and Denny frequently in the past. We're still undecided on several of them, but for the time being MK's "arsenal" will remain as is. (Don't forget: If we drop the truncheon, we lose not only a billyclub but a grappling hook, line, and nunchaks as well.)

And as for the bullet-dodging, maybe that's one of MK's "supernatural" ebilities, hm?

Gentlemen:

Re: MOON KNIGHT #15.

I am writing this letter without having so much as opened the comic. What I wish to comment on is not inside. I would simply like to say that this issue's cover has to be the best single illustration I have ever seen in the comics field. I can think of no higher compliment and to say more would be meaningless.

James O'Kelly Jr.
Bayonne, NJ

Gentlemen:

In the many years that I've been reading comics, I have yet to find anything spectacular enough to write about. Until now! The cover of MOON KNIGHT #15 was and still is the most impressive artwork I have ever seen. The question is: Can you top it?

Derek Mitchell
4117 Curry St.
Columbus, GA

Sure. In fact, we already have.

Doug and Bill:

Presenting "To State the Obvious" or "One Fan's Opinion."

Establishing shot: John Wilcox (21, a bit overweight, but nonetheless a *suave* individual) sits in a tan highbacked chair, surrounded by comics and stereo system, thinking to himself. John: "What should I write Doug and Bill this time? I don't want to be boring, but MOON KNIGHT #15 was simply outstanding as usual." closeup (eyes and mouth): "I know! Howzabout a gimmick letter done in script style?" (Thinks:) "Naw, it's been done before..." (Slow dissolve...)

So I guess I'll just say that #15 lived up to the unusually high standards of its predecessors — and the absence of obnoxious ads was most welcome. (Direct sales plug.) Xenos was one perverted villain and the rats-in-costumes scenes were totally bizarre. As an aside, has anyone else noticed that Marlene has been moving like a pinwheel? Check out pages 10 and 15. Can't that woman calm down? But I really like her nose.

Anyway, an altogether convincing political story. the fears and tensions of the police force were well represented, Doug. but once again the highlight of the issue revolves around those moments between Marlene and Steven — this time on page 10. That last panel closeup of Steven is a classic.

Lastly, on the question of the yacht raised in the letters page: I vote NO! Keep the mansion! Do you have any idea how much that property is worth?!

Jaunty John Wilcox
40 Hales Court
Westport, CT 06880

No.. but we bet the interest on one month's mortgage would buy a lot of pinball machines.

(Sayyy... haven't we seen you around here before, Wilcox? Like in the very first letter? Jaunty, he sez. Sneaky's more like it.)

Dear Editor:

there have been many Moon Knight stories before this, and many of note.

There have been many Doug Moench stories before this, so many that I have enjoyed.

Bill Sienkiewicz has drawn many covers and stories before this, and is now revered as one of the best.

But something.... some indefinable something... set MOON KNIGHT #14 apart from all the others.

So much like the stained glass of its title, this story was an interweaving of many pieces/characters, finally set into frame by that wondrous cover.

And again like rainbowed glass, so many times it caught the light and sparkled. Oh, how it sparkled to touch the heart.

The tribute to John Lennon was not, as I feared, a forced bit of melancholia. Instead the gun, which John Lennon so hated, became the shatterer of that beautifully crafted window of Moon Knight, Vince and Joe Fasinera, and the woman who was very light... scarlet, not rainbowed... scarlet, like warm blood splattered on glass, obscuring true beauty.

Thank you for MOON KNIGHT #14, a sincere tribute to a sincere thought of peace. In the hopes we may all see that vision...

Kevin J. Dooley
132 North Berendo St.
Los Angeles, CA 90004

Thanks, Kev.

And that wraps it, People. We've got a 32-page passle of goodies slated for next issue, natch. See you then?

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9. For completion by nonprofit organizations authorized to mail at special rates (Section 132.122, PSM). The purpose, function, and nonprofit status of this organization and the exempt status for Federal income tax purposes: (Check one.) [Have not changed during preceding 12 months. [Have changed during preceding 12 months. (If changed, publisher must submit explanation with this statement.)
10. EXTENT AND NATURE OF CIRCULATION.
A. Total No. Copies Printed (net press run): Average no. of copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 426,413. Single issue nearest to filing date: 393,350.
B. Paid Circulation: 1) Sales through dealers and carriers, street vendors, and counter sales: Average no. of copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 207,737. Single issue nearest to filing date: 154,414. 2) Mail subscriptions: Average no. of copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 450. Single issue nearest to filing date: 1,383.
C. Total Paid Circulation: (Sum of 1081 and 1082): Average no. of copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 208,187. Single issue nearest to filing date: 155,797.
D. Free Distribution by mail, carrier, or other means, samples, complimentary, and other free copies: Average no. of copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 571. Single issue nearest to filing date: 528.
E. Total Distribution: (Sum of C and D): Average no. of copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 208,758. Single issue nearest to filing date: 156,323.
F. Copies Not Distributed: 1) Office use, left-over, unaccounted, spoiled after printing: Average no. of copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 3,404. Single issue nearest to filing date: 27. 2) Returns from News Agents: Average no. of copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 214,251. Single issue nearest to filing date: 237,000.
G. Total (Sum of E, F1 and 2 should equal net press run shown in A): Average no. of copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 426,413. Single issue nearest to filing date: 393,350.
11. I certify that the statements made by me above are correct and complete.

(signed) Ed Shukin — Business Manager

12. For completion by publishers mailing at the regular rates (Section 132.121, Postal Service Manual). 39 U.S.C. 3626 provides in pertinent part: "No person who would have been entitled to mail matter under former section 4359 of this title shall mail such matter at the rates provided under this subsection unless he files annually with the Postal Service a written request for permission to mail matter at such rates."

In accordance with the provisions of this statute, I hereby request permission to mail the publication named in Item 1 at the reduced postage rates presently authorized by 39 U.S.C. 3626.

(signed) Ed Shukin — Business Manager

BULLPEN BULLETIN SPECIAL

BULLPEN BULLETINS SPECIAL!

WELCOME!

...to the first Bullpen Bulletins Special page. This column will appear each month from now on in MOON KNIGHT, KA-ZAR, and THE MICRONAUTS, the three Marvel titles which are sold exclusively to the Direct Market.

THE WHAT?

The *Direct Market*. Marvel Comics sells most of its publications two ways. The majority of our stuff is marketed by our national distributor, a company called Curtis Circulation Co. They act as our agent and arrange for comics to be shipped to the hundreds of independent Distributor wholesalers across the country. They, in turn, place the comics (and other magazines) at retail outlets like newsstands, drugstores, convenience stores, and supermarkets. This system is, frankly, rather haphazard. Frequently, retail outlets serviced by I.D. Wholesalers don't carry all the titles published, and carry some titles only sporadically. Often,the comics that reach the stores are in less-than-pristine condition and are generally given poor display by storekeepers, who don't understand or appreciate the medium. The result is that comics sold through this system tend to be bought by occasional readers and impulse buyers — folks who buy comics once in a while or on a hit-and-miss basis. Many of the comics distributed this way are unsold and returned.

A large number of our comics, however, are sold directly by Marvel to Direct Distributors who, in turn, sell the comics to comics specialty shops and other retail outlets. These comics are sold on a firm sale basis, and cannot be returned for credit. To make up for the lack of return privileges, Marvel allows a slightly higher discount to distributors on comics sold this way. Direct Distributors and the Comics Shop owners they service buy carefully and make sure that they sell what they buy because they do not return unsold copies. Therefore there is very little waste. This system is very efficient.

Comics specialty shops generally carry virtually every comic published every month. Because they specialize in comics, the shopkeepers tend to be knowledgeable folks who give the comics proper display and keep them in mint condition. Many even stock back issues. Naturally the type of comics buyers attracted to these stores are the comics collectors and aficionados — folks who buy a number of titles on a regular basis, our most intelligent, most discriminating, most demanding readers — *experts* in the graphic storytelling medium.

In other words, *you*.

If you're reading this, since this column appears only in titles sold exclusively to the Direct Market, chances are you bought the issue in your hands now at a Comics Specialty Shop, and chances are you're one of the collectors or aficionados mentioned above.

You — the Direct Market buyers — have become very important to Marvel Comics in recent times. You account for almost a third of our sales. In fact, the market you comprise is large enough and strong enough so that Marvel has committed three titles to that market on an exclusive basis. They are, again, MOON KNIGHT, KA-ZAR, and MICRONAUTS. We chose these three titles because all three showed outstanding popularity on the direct market — in other words *you* chose them.

I hear you wondering, "Why not THE X-MEN? Everyone knows that it's the most popular title!" True. And, therefore, it enjoys some notoriety even among I.D. Wholesalers and the folks they service. Therefore it receives generally wider display than most comics and generally does well through the I.D.'s. The Spider-Man titles, because Spider-Man is so well known, enjoy the same advantage. To take such titles off the I.D. Market would mean denying a significant number of loyal readers who don't live near a Comics Shop (and are too lazy to mail in a subscription) access to them. We don't want to do that.

THE POINT...?

The point is that we at Marvel Comics are going to bend over backwards to tailor these three titles to your sophisticated tastes. Al Milgrom, editor of THE MICRONAUTS, Louise Jones, editor of KA-ZAR, and Denny O'Neil, editor of MOON KNIGHT, have explained in various editorials just what that means in terms of the stories, features and articles on the *other* thirty-one pages of these titles. *I'm* going to tell you what it means on *this* page.

WHAT IT MEANS...

It means answers and information *you* want — the real, inside story from backstage at Marvel. It means facts and details that you won't find on the regular Bullpen Page, which is read by a more general audience, and therefore must be written for *all* of our readers, including the one-time impulse buyers and our younger, less knowledgeable fans. As Editor-in-Chief, I'm in a position to give you the lowdown on things regarding the All-Direct titles, other Marvel Comics and virtually anything we do. Got a question, or a request for something you'd like to see on this page? Drop me a line. The address is:

Jim Shooter
Marvel Comics Group
575 Madison Avenue
New York, New York 10022

I open and read all mail addressed to me (as does everyone *else* at Marvel, since I've been in charge). I can't answer every letter but I pay attention to what you say — because it's no bull that *we work for you*.

See you next month.

Jim Shooter

THE MIGHTY MARVEL CHECKLIST

☐ **MARVEL TWO-IN-ONE #86** — Written by TOM DeFALCO. Pencils by RON WILSON. Inks by CHIC STONE. The **Thing** and the **Sandman**!

☐ **SPIDER-WOMAN #43** — Written by CHRIS CLAREMONT. Breakdowns by STEVE LEIALOHA. Finishes by BOB WIACEK.

☐ **DAZZLER #14** — Written by DANNY FINGEROTH. Pencils by FRANK SPRINGER. Inks by VINCE COLLETTA.

☐ **KA-ZAR #13** — Written by BRUCE JONES. Breakdowns by BRENT ANDERSON. Finisnes by ARMANDO GIL.

☐ **DENNIS THE MENACE #6** — Written by FRED TOOLE. Art by the KETCHAM STUDIOS.

☐ **DAREDEVIL #181** — Special ***double-sized*** blockbuster! Script and breakdowns by FRANK MILLER. Finishes by KLAUS JANSON.

☐ **GIANT SILVER SURFER #1** — Plot, and pencils by JOHN BYRNE. Script by STAN LEE. Inks and colors by TOM PALMER. This time for *sure*!

☐ **AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #227** — Written by ROGER STERN. Breakdowns by JOHN ROMITA JR. Finishes by JIM MOONEY.

☐ **CAPTAIN AMERICA #268** — Written by J.M. DeMATTEIS. Pencils by MIKE ZECK. Inks by JOHN BEATTY.

☐ **THOR #318** — Written by DOUG MOENCH. Art by GIL KANE.

☐ **MICRONAUTS #40** — Written by BILL MANTLO. Breakdowns by GIL KANE. Finishes by DANNY BULANADI. Cover by MICHAEL GOLDEN.

☐ **GHOST RIDER #67** — Written by J.M. DeMATTEIS. Breakdowns by DON PERLIN. Finishes by TOM SUTTON.

☐ **MOON KNIGHT #18** — Written by DOUG MOENCH. Pencils by BILL SIENKIEWICZ. Inks by STEVE MITCHELL.

☐ **DOCTOR STRANGE #52** — Written by ROGER STERN. Breakdowns by MARSHALL ROGERS. Finishes by TERRY AUSTIN.

☐ **INCREDIBLE HULK #270** — Written by BILL MANTLO. Art by SAL BUSCEMA.

☐ **AVENGERS #218** — Written by J.M. DeMATTEIS. Pencils by BOB HALL. Inks by DAN GREEN.

☐ **CONAN #133** — Written by BRUCE JONES. Breakdowns by GIL KANE. Finishes by ERNIE CHAN.

☐ **MARVEL TALES #138** — Reprinting *Amazing Spider-Man #1* by STAN LEE and STEVE DITKO!

☐ **X-MEN #156** — Written by CHRIS CLAREMONT. Pencils by DAVE COCKRUM. Inks by BOB WIACEK.

☐ **ROM #29** — Written by BILL MANTLO. Breakdowns by SAL BUSCEMA. Finishes by JOE SINNOTT.

☐ **POWER MAN/IRON FIST #80** — Written by JO DUFFY. Pencils by DENYS COWAN. Inks by RICARDO VILLAMONTE.

☐ **FANTASTIC FOUR #241** — Written, penciled and inked by JOHN BYRNE.

☐ **MARVEL TEAM-UP #116** — Written by J.M. DeMATTEIS. Pencils by HERB TRIMPE. Inks by MIKE ESPOSITO. **Spider-Man**, and the **Valkyrie**! Plus: the mighty **Thor**!

☐ **IRON MAN #157** — Written by DAVID MICHELINIE. Pencils by BOB McLEOD. Inks by DAN GREEN.

☐ **PETER PARKER, THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN #65** — Written by BILL MANTLO. Pencils by BOB HALL. Inks by JIM MOONEY.

☐ **DEFENDERS #106** — Written by J.M. DeMATTEIS. Breakdowns by DON PERLIN. Finishes by JOE SINNOTT.

☐ **STAR WARS #58** — Written by DAVID MICHELINIE. Breakdowns by WALT SIMONSON. Finishes by TOM PALMER.

☐ **MASTER OF KUNG FU #111** — Written by DOUG MOENCH. Pencils by GENE DAY. Inks by JACK ABEL.

☐ **WHAT IF? #32** — Written by MARK GRUENWALD. Layouts by GRUENWALD. Finished pencils by GREG LaROCQUE. *"What If the Avengers, Were the Pawns of Korvac?"* Featuring the **Avengers**, **Galactus**, the **Watcher**, the **Celestials**, the **Stranger**, the **Grand-Master**, and the **High Evolutionary**!

MARVEL MAGAZINES

☐ **CRAZY #84** — Cover by BOB LARKIN. *An American Werewoof in London, The Tonot Show, Teen Hulk, Kinetic Kids, Obnoxio's Fun Page* and more such items of funny stuff.

☐ **SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN #74** — Cover by JOE JUSKO. "Temple of the Twelve-Eyed Thing," written by MICHAEL FLEISHER. Art by ALFREDO ALCALA. Plus, part II of "Island of Pirates' Doom" by ROY THOMAS, JOHN BUSCEMA, and DANNY BULANADI.

☐ **BIZARRE ADVENTURES #30** — The return of ***Paradox!*** Written by BILL MANTLO. Pencils by MIKE VOSBURG. Inks by JOE JUSKO. Cover painting by JEFF EASLY.

SPECIAL EVENTS

☐ **MARVEL GRAPHIC NOVEL #1** — THE DEATH OF CAPTAIN MARVEL. Story and art by JIM STARLIN. The beginning of a new era in pictorial storytelling (see Hype Box for details).

THE HYPE BOX

MARVEL TWO-IN-ONE #86 — The **Thing** and the **Sandman** go head to head for the greatest... *conversation* of all? It's the most off-beat and exciting character study you'll see in a decade.

DAREDEVIL #181 — Special **double-sized** issue that'll have all fandom gasping for months! Bullseye vs. Elektra! One wins... one *dies*! Don't miss this FRANK MILLER/KLAUS JANSON shocker!

WHAT IF? #32 — *"What If the Avengers Were the Pawns of Korvac?"*, featuring all of Marvel's cosmic heavies including **Galactus**, the **Watcher**, the **Stranger**, the **Celestials**, the **Grand Master**, and the **High Evolutionary**. Oh yeah — it's got the **Avengers**, too. Written and layed-out by MARK GRUENWALD with pencils by GREG LaROCQUE.

BIZARRE ADVENTURES #30 — Because you demanded it: the return of ***Paradox!*** Co-produced by BILL MANTLO: MIKE VOSBURG, and JOE JUSKO.

MARVEL GRAPHIC NOVEL #1 — Join us as we usher in a new era of pictorial story-telling with this, the first of Marvel's new *Graphic Novel* series. To get things off to a startling beginning, we've got the long-awaited epic entitled: ***"The Death Of Captain Marvel!"*** Written and drawn by JIM STARLIN, this 48-page squarebound trade paperback will be beautifully printed in full-color on high quality paper. It'll sell for $4.95 and be available in comics shops only. We think you'll find the price — and the search — worth the trouble. We *know* you will.

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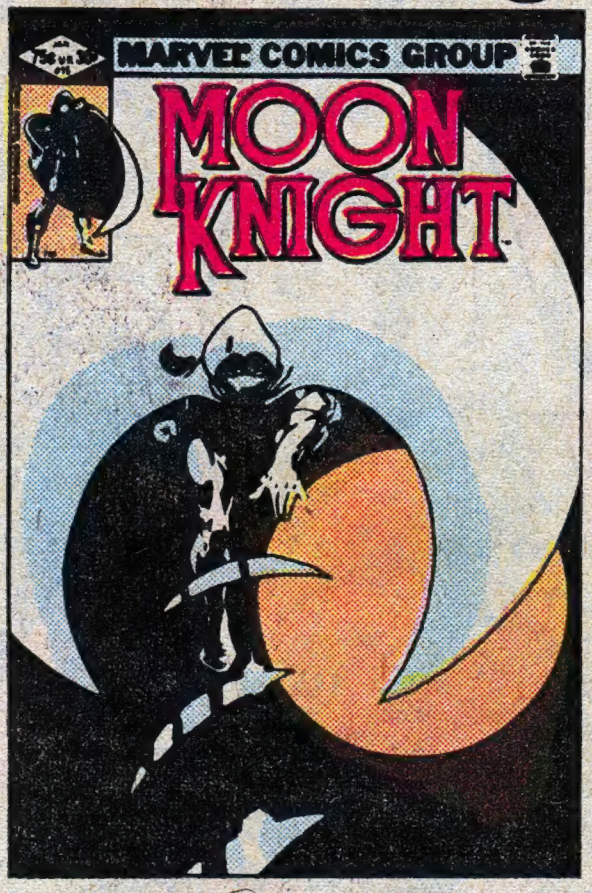

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—The Marvel Bullpen

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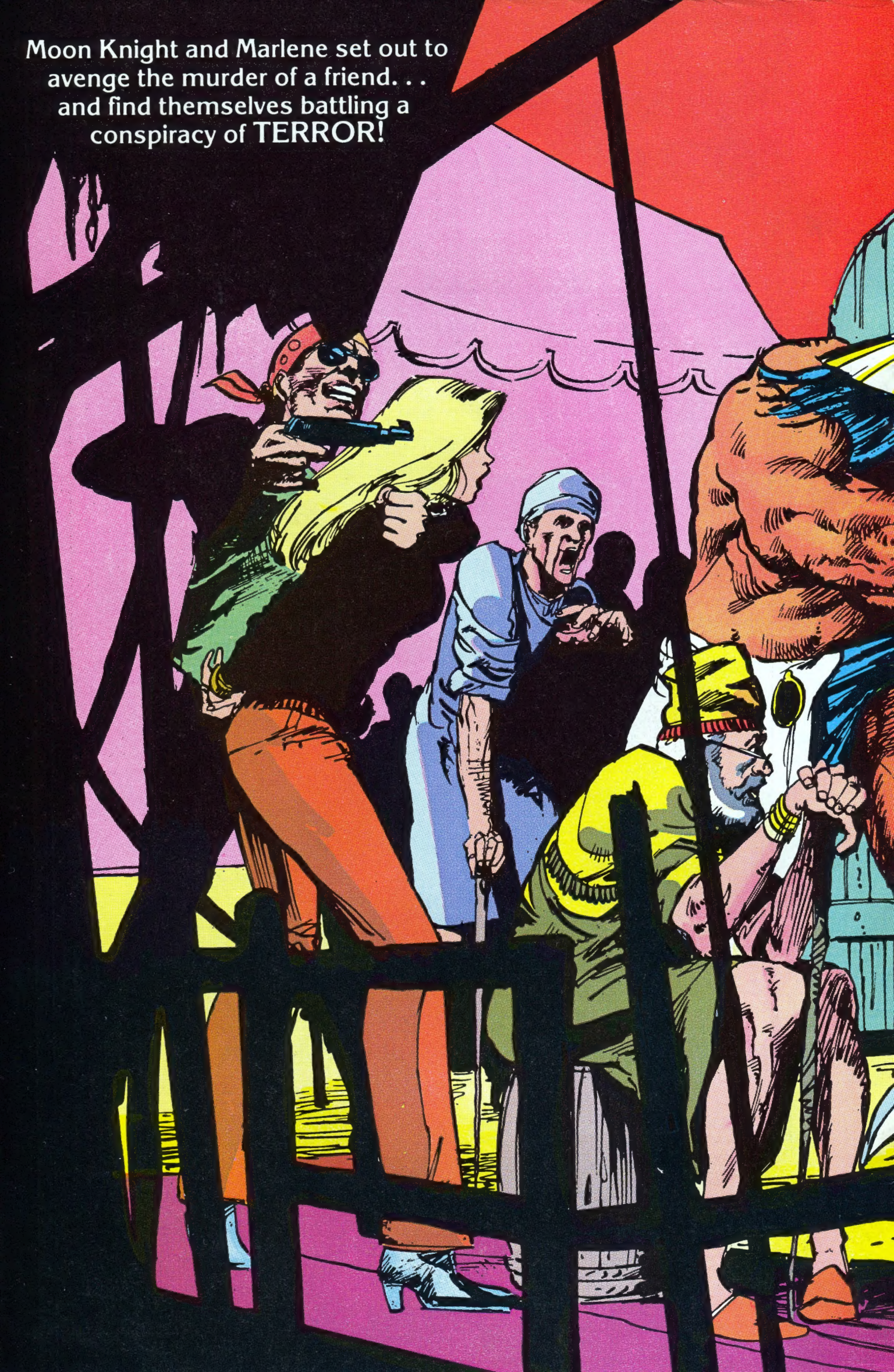
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